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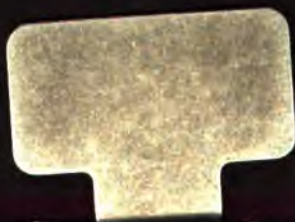
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LECTURES
ON THE
EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

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LECTURES
ON THE
EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

BY THE LATE
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UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.



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CHAPTER IX.

THE comparison made in chap. viii. between the services of the old covenant and the ministry of Christ as mediator of the new, the apostle now prosecutes more in detail, with the view of still further illustrating the great superiority of the latter. He brings individual parts of the ancient tabernacle and its services into view, to aid him in giving strength and impressiveness to his argument.

Vers. 1–5. The first five verses present a description of the earthly sanctuary, and of certain things in it. In the first verse the apostle allows that, though, as he had shown, the Mosaic economy was old and vanishing away, it yet had been an imposing institution, possessed of many rites, and a well-ordered sanctuary. The phrase *μὲν οὖν* both serves to continue the discourse, and carries something of an air of concession with it. *Καὶ* prefixed to *ἡ πρώτη* does not suggest a comparison with the new covenant, as if the meaning were that the old also had ordinances as well as the new; but it introduces information regarding the first covenant additional to what had already been given. Many mss. read *σκηνὴ* after *πρώτη*, but there can be no doubt that this is an addition wrongly made to the text by some transcriber. It is of covenants the apostle has been speaking in the preceding chapter, and *διαθήκη* is the word that must be supplied to *πρώτη*, which stands alone in the most ancient mss. and versions. The tense of *εἶχε* may refer either to the original institution of the covenant mentioned in the preceding chapter, or to the fact of its being on the point of vanishing, which is also there exhibited. It has been supposed by Luther, Grotius, Cameron, Carpzov, and others, that because *δικαιώματα* and *λατρείας* occur separately as accusatives

in vers. 6, 10, they must be taken as accusatives here also, as if the meaning were, ordinances, services, and a sanctuary. Without doubt, *λατρείας* must be viewed as a genitive connected with *δικαιώματα* in the sense of ordinances of worship. The usual mode of joining three members together in this epistle is by *τὲ καὶ* or *τὲ* between the first two, and *καὶ* between the second and third (chap. ii. 4, xi. 32, vi. 2, 4). By supposing only two members, you have a mode of connection, which is the appropriate one, where two things are mentioned, of which the one stands not co-ordinate with the other, but in some measure subordinate to it (Kühner, ii. 417; Winer, 517). To the idea, moreover, of a twofold division corresponds the fact, that in the following verses you have first an account of the sanctuary (2-5); and secondly, an account of the services performed in it (6-10). Besides, were you to make *δικαιώματα* a separate member from *λατρείας*, you would give it far too wide and vague a reference. It is ordinances connected with the worship of the tabernacle which alone it falls in with the apostle's object here to speak of; and such only, in fact, are specified in what follows. The ordinances meant are ordinances connected with the worship of Jehovah, the regulations to be observed by both people and priests when they went up to the holy hill of Zion. Every part of divine service was most minutely regulated among the Jews. Innumerable rules were laid down in the book of Leviticus, and close attention to them was required. The whole service was one of form and ritualism.

Besides ordinances of worship, the apostle tells us that the first covenant had also a sanctuary. This was the place where the rites and ceremonies of the law were observed, the central point of the whole Jewish system. It was the place where Jehovah revealed Himself to His people, and bestowed blessings upon them; and by His presence in it He was conceived as dwelling in the midst of them. It was His house, the theocratic palace. *Ἅγιον* here denotes the whole sacred structure, styled in Hebrew *עֲדֹת־יְהוָה*, which is rendered by the LXX. *τὸ ἅγιον*, and also *ὁ τόπος ἅγιος*. *Ἅγιον* has the article, because it is a definite sanctuary to which the apostle refers; but *δικαιώματα* wants it, for there were many ordinances, and only some of them are described in what follows. *Ἅγιον* has the

epithet *κοσμικὸν* appended to it, of which very different views have been taken. Homberg understood it to mean "beautiful, well-ordered;" but *κόσμιον* would have been the proper word to express this idea. Chrysostom, Theophylact, Erasmus, and others suppose it to mean, "accessible to all the world, designed for all nations" (*καὶ Ἑλλήσι βατόν*, Chrysostom), because there was a part of it into which Gentiles were admitted; but though individual Gentiles had access as proselytes to the rites of Jewish worship, still it was a striking feature of the old dispensation, as distinguished from the new, that it belonged to a particular nation. Kypke's rendering of *κοσμικόν*, "world-renowned," is well refuted by Böhme, on the ground that, though it might suit the temple, it does not at all apply to the tabernacle: to which it may be added, that the signification cannot be proved to belong to the word. Theodoret, Grotius, Wetstein, Macknight, and others, laying hold of the ideas of Josephus (*Antiq.* iii. 11) and Philo (*Leg.* ii.) regarding the tabernacle, interpret the phrase as meaning a sanctuary typical or representative of the material universe; but even Böhme, who defends this exposition, allows that the sense thus assigned to *κοσμικὸν* is novel and unprecedented; and, moreover, the Jewish tabernacle is expressly declared by the apostle himself in the verses that follow to have been a type, not of the material universe, but of the sanctuary in heaven where Christ ministers. On this ground, therefore, it is obvious that the true explanation of the words before us must be gathered by contrast from what is said in ver. 11 of the sanctuary of the new covenant, which is described as *οὐ χειροποιήτου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν, οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως*,—not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building. The sanctuary of the first covenant, we are thus reminded, was made with hands: it was an earthly building; it was, like the priests who ministered in it, *ἐπὶ γῆς* (chap. viii. 4), which seems to express the same idea as *κοσμικόν*. It was a structure belonging to this world, composed of wood and stone, and perishable like all below. Reared by human hands, it was, though devoted to God, like all man's works, transitory and imperfect. To this view it is objected by Böhme, that the apostle is not to be regarded in the verse before us as uttering anything depreciatory of the Jewish sanctuary, but rather as

commending it. The obvious reply is, that it is true the Jewish sanctuary was a sanctuary upon earth, and that its glory consisted not in any intrinsic excellence of its own, but in its being the adumbration of a sanctuary in heaven. The epithet worldly or earthly is suggested to the apostle by the qualities of another sanctuary which he has in his mind, and which it is his purpose immediately to bring into view as greater and more glorious than the Jewish. The ancient tabernacle, as it was built by man, has perished, and nothing of all its magnificence remains; but the sanctuary of the new covenant is imperishable. It stands in heaven, where the vicissitudes and commotions of this world cannot reach it.

Ver. 2. The apostle now proceeds to describe more particularly the earthly sanctuary as set up by Moses. *Γὰρ* introduces a detailed illustration. *Σκηνή* denotes here, not the whole sacred structure, as it does in chap. viii. 5, ix. 21, but only the exterior division of it. This is plain, both from the fact that it is indefinite, “a tent,” not the same thing mentioned in the preceding verse, and from the limiting clause *ἡ πρώτη*, which means the apartment you first came to on entering. The arrangement of the words is studiously adjusted to prevent ambiguity. Had *ἡ πρώτη* stood first, it might have been supposed to refer to the same thing as *ἡ πρώτη* in the preceding verse. In vers. 3, 6, 7, *σκηνή* again occurs applied to separate parts of the whole tabernacle. The divisions were complete in themselves, and accordingly in Ps. xliii. 3 you read of *תְּהִנֵּנִי*, thy tabernacles, rendered by LXX. *τὰ σκηνώματά σου*. The outer apartment, we are told, was called *ἄγια*, *pluralis excellentiæ*. Erasmus and Stephens propose to read *ἁγία*, feminine singular, to agree with *ἦτις*, which is the reading followed in the margin of the English Bible; but in the LXX. it is the neuter of this word that is always employed to denote both the tabernacle as a whole, and also its parts. *Τὸ ἅγιον, τὸ ἅγιον τῶν ἁγίων*, and *τὰ ἅγια τῶν ἁγίων* (Ex. xxvi. 33; Num. iv. 4; 1 Kings viii. 6). Here no doubt the apostle might have said *ἅγιον*, but he chooses a plural, because the thing meant is different from the *τὸ ἅγιον* of the first verse. This division of the tabernacle, the holy place, was oblong in shape. It was 20 cubits long, 10 high, and 10 wide (Ex. xxvi. 15–18).

The apostle mentions several of the articles that were contained in this apartment. The first is ἡ λυχνία, the candlestick, מִנְיָה, which is minutely described in Ex. xxv. 31, xxxvii. 17. It was made of a talent of pure gold, after the pattern exhibited to Moses in the mount. It had six branches proceeding laterally from it, three on the one side and three on the other, which, together with the central stem, made seven receptacles of light that were to burn continually before the Lord.

Ἡ τράπεζα, the table, מִזְבֵּחַ, is described in Ex. xxv. 23-30, xxxvii. 10-15. It was made of shittim or acacia wood, overlaid with pure gold, surrounded with a border, and lifted by means of staves put through four rings. Upon this table was placed the shew-bread, which is next mentioned by the apostle: ἡ προθέσεις τῶν ἄρτων. This is a literal rendering of one of the names of this bread, viz. לֶחֶם עֵרֶךְ (Ex. xl. 23). A very similar designation occurs in 2 Chron. xiii. 11, viz. מַעְרָכָה לֶחֶם, which is rendered in the Septuagint προθέσεις ἄρτων. There is no occasion, therefore, to suppose any hypallage in the words before us; for they properly denote, "array of loaves," *propositio panum*, and thus express the idea exactly. This bread was also called לֶחֶם פָּנִים (Ex. xxv. 30), bread of presence, ἄρτους ἐνώπιους (Septuagint). There were twelve loaves, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel. They were arranged in two rows, and they were changed every week. The name they bore had reference to the fact of presentation before the Lord (Lev. xxiv. 5-9).

Ver. 3 takes us into the inner apartment. The veil here mentioned was the division between the outer and the inner. It is called the second, which implies there was a first, though it is not mentioned in the preceding verse. The first veil, called פָּרֹכֶת, ἐπίσπαστρον, κάλυμμα (Ex. xxvi. 36), separated the holy place from the court without; and the second veil, called מַחֲצֵית הַכֹּהֵן, καταπέτασμα (Ex. xxvi. 31), separated the holy place from the most holy, which is here called ἅγια ἁγίων. The Septuagint renders the Hebrew name קֹדֶשׁ קֳדָשׁ generally by ἅγιον ἁγίων, though sometimes also by ἅγια ἁγίων, as in Num. iv. 19. This was the inmost recess of the tabernacle. It was the dwelling-place (מְעוֹנָה) of Jehovah among His people. It was called דְּבִיר even before the days of Solomon (Ps. xxviii. 2), though

this word is most generally applied to the most holy place of the temple, as distinguished from the tabernacle.

Ver. 4. The objects belonging to the most holy place are next mentioned by the apostle. The first is χρυσοῦν θυμιατήριον. There have been endless controversies about this phrase. The ground of difficulty lies in the fact that in ver. 2 the apostle does not mention the altar of incense, which we know stood in the holy place (Ex. xxx. 1-10), while here he mentions an object in connection with the most holy place about which Moses is silent. The first idea that presents itself is, that the χρυσοῦν θυμιατήριον must just be the missing altar of incense; and this is the view adopted by Calvin, De Wette, Winer, and many others. Nor is it any objection to this view, that that altar, מִזְבֵּחַ הָעֹלֶת, is styled by the LXX. θυσιαστήριον θυμιάματος, for our author does not confine himself to the language of the LXX.; and it is an acknowledged fact that θυμιατήριον is the word used by Josephus, Philo, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Origen, to designate the altar of incense. A more formidable objection seems to lie in the fact that the altar of incense stood in the holy place, whilst the object here spoken of is connected with the most holy place. It has therefore been supposed by the majority of interpreters, that θυμιατήριον must here mean a censer, intended for the incense that was burned in the most holy place on the great day of annual atonement (Lev. xvi. 12); and the Vulgate renders it by *thuribulum*, though the Itala has *altare*. But this idea does not seem to extricate us from the difficulty, for we are not told that any censer was deposited in the most holy place. On the contrary, we may infer that the censer used would lie somewhere about the altar of incense; otherwise, the priest would have required to enter into the most holy place before he entered with his offering. We seem, therefore, to get no more advantage by making θυμιατήριον mean a censer than by supposing it to mean the altar of incense; and as it is difficult to imagine why the apostle should have omitted so important an article, there is not a little reason for so understanding the word. Then are we to suppose our author contradicts Moses, by putting this altar in the most holy place? By no means; for it is plain from the 7th verse, where he mentions that the high priest entered alone

once a year into the oracle, that he could not mean to place there an altar on which incense was burned every day. This would be a mistake, not more inconsistent with inspiration, than with a degree of knowledge of Jewish affairs infinitely less than is everywhere displayed in this epistle. Then what are we to understand as the meaning of *ἔχουσα*? Even Tholuck, when disposed to view *θυμιατήριον* as meaning censer, allows that *ἔχουσα* cannot mean holding, but owning or possessing; and Grotius says that the import of the word is, that the *θυμιατήριον* or *vattillum* had respect to the ark in the most holy place: *Habere enim dicimur quod in nostro usu est*. Now this view of *ἔχουσα* will equally suit the other signification attached to *θυμιατήριον*; for the altar of incense, like the censer connected with it, though standing in the holy place, was specially related to the most holy. This is plain from Ex. xxx. 6, xl. 5, where the situation of the altar of incense is described with reference to the position of objects in the most holy place; and in 1 Kings vi. 22, where the temple of Solomon is described, the altar of incense is called *הַמִּזְבֵּחַ אֲשֶׁר לַיהוָה*. It must be acknowledged, however, that there is something objectionable in making *ἔχουσα* bear one sense with reference to one of the words in the sentence, and a different sense with regard to the rest. The want of the article, too, before *θυμιατήριον* is an argument of very considerable force against the idea of its referring to an object so well known as the altar of incense, and the only one of its kind. If the supposition which has been made—that the censer, employed on the great day of annual atonement, lay all the year in the most holy place, so situated that it could be laid hold of by the priest without his entering—could be established by any valid testimony, it would turn the scale in favour of censer as the meaning of *θυμιατήριον* here, however difficult it might still be to account for the omission of the altar of incense. For there can be no doubt that *θυμιατήριον* in the LXX. does mean a censer, being employed as the rendering of *מִקְטָרֶי* (2 Chron. xxvi. 19; Ezek. viii. 11), whilst the word used for altar is *θυσιαστήριον*, and also *βωμός*.

The ark of the covenant is next mentioned as belonging to the most holy place. This was a small wooden chest, $2\frac{1}{2}$ cubits long and $1\frac{1}{2}$ broad and high; and it was completely overlaid

with gold, within and without. Its great purpose was to contain the two stone tablets, called in the verse before us *αἱ πλάκες τῆς διαθήκης*, on which God's own finger had written the words of the law, whence it was called *אֲרֹן בְּרִית* and *אֲרֹן הָעֵדוּת*. It was not the whole of the laws and ordinances contained in the writings of Moses that were engraven upon these tables, but only the ten commandments (Ex. xxxiv. 28); whence the designation of the two great divisions of the moral law as the first and second table, on the highly probable supposition that the first four commandments were engraven upon one stone and the last six upon another.

The clause about the pot of manna and the budding rod has occasioned no small discussion. In 1 Kings viii. 9 and 2 Chron. v. 10, it is expressly said there was nothing in the ark save the two tables of the law, which Moses put therein at Horeb. Violent methods have therefore been employed with *ἐν ᾧ*, either to make it refer to *σκαηνή*, or to make it mean "beside which" (Macknight); but without doubt it must refer to the ark, and it can only mean "in which." It is overlooked by those who propose such an ungrammatical rendering of *ἐν ᾧ*, that though it might suit the supposed position of the pot and the rod, it would have the effect of placing the tables of the law outside the ark also, and would thus create a far greater difficulty than it removed. Carpzov seems to have suggested the true solution. The passages in Kings and Chronicles speak of what was in the ark after the temple was built, but our author is speaking of the tabernacle in the days of Moses. Now the pot of manna and Aaron's rod might have disappeared during the time the ark was in the land of the Philistines, as it is supposed that even the tables of the law themselves were lost at the commencement of the Babylonish captivity. Is there any ground, then, for thinking that the pot and the rod spoken of were put into the ark in the days of Moses? There is: for, first, there was no receptacle for anything within the veil excepting the ark; and the articles in question must either have been in it, or lying upon the ground, which is hardly to be supposed, when the frequency with which the tabernacle was taken down and removed to a different place is considered. And again, in Ex. xvi. 33 and Num. xvii. 10, we are told that

the articles under notice were laid up, not before the ark, but *לפני הַתְּעֻדָּה*, before the testimony, in presence of the testimony, which, without any violence, may be viewed as implying that they were beside the testimony, and of course inside the ark. Certain it is, too, though these words do not absolutely necessitate the supposition of their being inside the ark, but only admit of it, that this idea universally prevailed among the Jews of ancient times; for Abarbanel, as quoted by Tholuck, expressly says, "Our forefathers had the tradition, that the vessel with manna and Aaron's rod were preserved in the ark of the covenant." It seems altogether fitting, too, that they should have had this position; for while the testimony was a memorial of God's covenant, and of His authority over the people, the manna and the flourishing rod were monuments of the marvellous deliverance He had wrought for them in providence, and the decision He had given in reference to the priesthood of Aaron. Thus the ark would remind the people at once of law, providence, and reconciliation.

Ver. 5. The next objects in the most holy place that are mentioned by the apostle are the cherubim, which are described in Ex. xxv. 18–20. They were figures placed over the ark, *αὐτῆς* being understood to mean *κιβωτοῦ*, one resting upon each end of its lid; and their wings, meeting together in the centre, overshadowed what they stood upon. They are called *χερουβιμ δόξης*, some suppose, in the sense of glorious cherubim, according to a common construction (Acts vii. 2; Jas. ii. 1; 1 Cor. ii. 8), but more probably with reference to the glory of the divine presence, styled *שְׂכִינָה* by the Rabbins, which appears to have rested over the mercy-seat or lid of the ark, and to have been borne up by them. The want of the article before *δόξης* rather favours the former view; but the fact that it was God's glory the whole scene was designed to exhibit, and that it was from between the cherubim God spake when consulted, seems to shut us up to the latter view. Boehme supposes *δόξης* to be here construed anarthrously like a proper name; and Tholuck refers to a passage in 1 Sam. iv. 22, where the glory of the Lord is mentioned in the same manner. In Ps. lxxx. 2, we are told that God sitteth upon the cherubim, *יָשַׁב הַכְּרֻבִּים*, from which it has been inferred that the cloud symbolic of the divine

presence floated over the cherubim, and was borne up by them. If that was the case, we cannot imagine a stronger reason for the cherubim being called *χερουβιμ δόξης*, seeing that the cloud in question is frequently styled *כְּבוֹד* and *δόξα* in the Old Testament. Winer, indeed (*Realw.* i. 204), and Bæhr (i. 396, *Symb.*), regard the idea of a visible symbol of the divine presence as a rabbinical fable, explaining the cloud mentioned in Lev. xvi. 2, 13, of the cloud of incense raised by the priest when he entered into the most holy place. It may not be easy to prove that there was a permanent supernatural cloud encircling a permanent supernatural light over the ark and between the cherubim; but certainly there are very strong arguments in favour of this idea, and conclusive arguments to show that such a cloud sometimes at least occupied the position described. For, first, we are plainly told that God's presence was displayed in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, which were visible to the people, and directed their movements (Ex. xvi. 10, xxiv. 16, 17; Num. ix. 18-21). Then we are told, that when the tabernacle was set up a cloud covered it, and the glory of the Lord filled it (Ex. xl. 34); and the same was the case with the temple of Solomon (1 Kings viii. 11). On certain great occasions, too, we find that God spake to Moses and Aaron out of the cloud, visibly appearing at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation (Num. xii. 5, 6, 10, xi. 25). Then, further, we are informed that when Moses entered into the tabernacle to consult the Lord, it was always from between the cherubim that the responses came (Ex. xxv. 22; Num. xxvii. 89). And even in after times God was described as dwelling between the cherubim (1 Sam. iv. 4; 2 Sam. vi. 2). It does not seem an unnatural inference from these premises, that a cloud permanently stood or floated over the mercy-seat and between the cherubim. This cloud was called *שְׁכִינָה* by the Rabbins, because God was conceived to dwell in it; and this name is of frequent occurrence in the Targums.

The lid of the ark was called *כַּפֹּרֶת*, which is everywhere translated by the LXX. *ἱλαστήριον*, and twice more fully, *ἱλαστήριον ἐπίθεμα* (Ex. xxv. 17, xxxvii. 6). The ground of this translation is the meaning which the *Piel* form of the root *כפר* bears, viz. to expiate, to cover transgression, to pardon.

Gesenius seems to doubt whether כַּפֹּת should not be understood simply as meaning "lid, cover;" and he argues that dagessated nouns not rarely have meanings derived from the simple form *Kal*; but it is also true that more frequently their signification is determined by the force of *Piel*. And that it is so in the present case, is demonstrated by a passage in 1 Chron. xxviii. 11, where the most holy place is styled בֵּית הַכַּפֹּת. Now if כַּפֹּת meant simply a lid, how ridiculous would it be to ground a designation of the apartment upon such an article! House of the lid! But if mercy-seat be its proper meaning, then, as this was the most important object in the sanctuary, the force and beauty of the designation are at once apparent—house or place of the mercy-seat. The propriety of the Septuagint's rendering, therefore, will not bear a question. And the apostle has stamped the seal of his authority upon it, adopting their word, *ἱλαστήριον*. Luther: *Gnadenstuhl*, propitiatory, the place where God showed Himself propitious. The reason why this designation was applied to the cover of the ark is unfolded in Lev. xvi. 13–15, where we are told that Aaron sprinkled the blood of the bullock and of the goat with his finger upon the mercy-seat, and thus made atonement for himself and the congregation; so that the lid of the ark was really the seat of the forgiving Jehovah, the place where pardoning mercy was to be sought. *ἱλαστήριον* is primarily an adjective, denoting "making propitious;" and as here it is applied substantively to the place where this effect is produced, the mercy-seat, *ἱλαστήριον ἐπίθεμα*, the propitiatory lid or cover, so in Rom. iii. 25 it is applied to the victim that makes propitiation, viz. Christ. He is *ἱλαστήριον*, a propitiation, or a propitiating sacrifice.

In the last clause, *ὧν* refers not to the cherubim merely, but to all the objects enumerated as connected with the tabernacle. There were many things he might have said regarding them, and others he might have mentioned; but it does not fall in with his present purpose to handle these matters minutely, to consider them *κατὰ μέρος*, part by part, severally, particularly. Now what is it the apostle here declines to do? Is it merely to describe the shape and size and substance of all the articles referred to? Or may there not also be included the unfolding of their symbolical meaning? That this is not to be excluded,

is plain from the fact that the typical and symbolical meaning of some of them is actually exhibited in what follows. Though the apostle, therefore, does not enter upon the subject in all its extent, he manifestly considers the divisions of the tabernacle and their various articles of furniture as having a mystical signification. He has already declared the earthly tabernacle to be the example and shadow of heavenly things (viii. 5) ; and at chap. ix. 8 he gives an explanation of what was intended to be taught by the exclusion of all but the high priest from the holy of holies, and says it was a figure for the time then present. It cannot be wrong, therefore, for us to inquire, in a spirit of modesty and caution, whether there be any way of discovering what the various objects described in the verses before us were intended to symbolize and typify.

Vers. 6-8. Symbolism occupied a place in ancient times which does not belong to it now. Men were then incapable of apprehending spiritual and abstract ideas ; and therefore visible and tangible objects were employed as the means of arresting their attention, and exciting in their minds some approximate conceptions of the character of God and the nature of duty. The physical was made a ladder to raise them gradually to the unseen and spiritual. Now it was both for this purpose, and also to prefigure the glorious work of Christ, that the services of the tabernacle were instituted ; and therefore there are two views which must be taken of the objects under consideration. They must be viewed as symbolical of certain principles and spiritual ideas at the time, and also as typical of events that were to happen at a far distant time. As symbols they taught moral lessons, as types they predicted future events.

The view of Philo and Josephus, though adopted by not a few in modern times, that the tabernacle represented the visible universe, the seven lamps being the seven planets, is to be utterly rejected. Spiritual and abstract ideas were the proper objects of symbolical representation. The tabernacle, as a whole, seems to have been designed as a symbol of God's presence with His people. It was the theocratic palace. It was the dwelling-place of Jehovah. With regard to the different apartments of the tabernacle, Hengstenberg and Tholuck view the holy place as the symbol of the people's relation to God, and the most

holy as the symbol of God's relation to the people. This, however, does not seem to be a well-grounded idea. Relations are always reciprocal ; and whatever the holy place denoted in reference to the people, it would denote just the converse in reference to God ; and whatever the most holy place also denoted in reference to the one, it would denote just the converse in reference to the other. It seems far better, therefore, to understand the holy place as symbolizing one kind of relation between God and the people, and the most holy another and a higher. And what might these relations be ? The holy place was accessible to all the priests daily ; the most holy, only to the high priest, and that even but once a year. Might not the holy place therefore denote that measure of regular communion with God which was attainable here below ; and the most holy, that perfect unbroken communion which, though the ultimate object to be aimed at, yet was never actually realized upon earth ? The exclusion of all but one from the inmost shrine, and his exclusion too on all ordinary occasions, would suggest to the people the idea of a closeness of approach to God for which as yet they were altogether unfit ; whilst, at the same time, the attainableness of such communion would be implied in the admission of the high priest at the time of the solemn services of the great day of annual atonement. On the other hand, the daily admission of the ordinary priests to the exterior apartment would suggest the idea of a less intimate communion with God which might be enjoyed regularly in this world. And might not the outer court too, where the mixed multitude were permitted to walk, suggest the idea of a connection with the congregation of God's people, unaccompanied with any spiritual communion at all ? Now, if these were the spiritual and abstract conceptions that were symbolized by the different parts of the tabernacle, then of course it must follow, in accordance with them, that the holy place was designed as a type of earth, or of the church on earth till the end of time,—in other words, of the church militant ; whilst the most holy place must be viewed as a type of heaven, or of the church triumphant, admitted there to perfect communion with God.

The several articles, too, in the holy place, and in the most holy, were doubtless both symbolical of certain ideas and typical

of certain future objects. The candlestick stood in the holy place. Now, light in all ages has been the symbol of knowledge. And therefore we are shut up, by the position of the candlestick, to the conclusion that it denoted the spiritual and divine knowledge which God imparted to His chosen people. The world was immersed in darkness, but light shone from heaven upon Israel. As Egypt had been covered with a dense cloud at the time of the plagues, whilst the children of Israel had light in their dwellings; so, whilst all the rest of the world were ignorant of God, the chosen race were blessed with a supernatural revelation of the divine will. And the seven lamps of the candlestick, seven being the number of perfection, as also the pure oil which the priests were required to use for the light, must be viewed as symbolic of the excellence of the knowledge with which God favoured His people. It was a knowledge of Himself, perfectly adapted to their circumstances, and free from all intermixture of error. And if a distinction were to be made between the import of the candlestick and of the light itself, we should say that, whilst the light meant knowledge, the candlestick, as bearing the light, meant the word of God; and it would of course be typical of the volume of inspiration to be completed by prophets and apostles in the fulness of time. It might also be viewed not unnaturally as furnishing a type of Christ, whose Spirit dictated the word, and who also Himself is described as the light of the world. If it be considered, too, that the church as a corporate body has become possessed of divine knowledge, and is appointed to hold forth the light of it to the world, the reason will appear why in the Apocalypse the seven golden candlesticks are explained as meaning churches. These representations are not inconsistent with one another. The knowledge of God, imparted by Christ, collected into one focus in the Bible, possessed by the church as a sacred treasure, and to be diffused by her instrumentality through all the earth, is the grand object that was typified by the candlestick with seven branches standing in the holy place.

The next objects mentioned by the apostle are the table, and the shew-bread that stood upon it. Hengstenberg and Tholuck suppose that this bread denotes the offering of the church to God; or, in other words, the people themselves viewed as dedi-

cated to God, including of course their works, their services, their obedience. There are several considerations, however, which oppose this view. The designation *לֶחֶם הַפָּנִים* does not appear to mean bread set before God to be seen by Him, as if the expression were *לִפְנֵי*, but bread of God's face, that is, bread of God (Bæhr's *Symb.* i. 425). It was not bread conceived to be for the use of the presiding Deity, as was the case in heathen temples, but it was bread placed before God for His blessing, and then brought out from His presence to be eaten by the priests for their refreshment and nourishment. Most naturally, therefore, it should be viewed as symbolical of the spiritual food bestowed by God upon His people, of the means provided by Him for the support of their spiritual life; and they were taught, that as material bread was requisite for the support of the body, so bread from God's presence was indispensable to the growth of the soul in grace. The number of the loaves, too, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel, indicated that the spiritual food meant was provided for God's covenant people; and the fact of the loaves being unleavened, denoted the purity and excellence of all the appointed means of grace. Bæhr says that the shew-bread refers to the rich provision made for the redeemed in heaven; but his interpretation is chargeable with this great defect, that it does not distinguish between the symbolical meaning of the holy place and of the most holy. If the distinction we have pointed out be well founded, then the shew-bread must symbolize the spiritual food provided for believers in this world. And if it be asked of what, under the gospel, this ancient bread of the holy place was a type, the answer is obvious: Of Christ, who describes Himself as the bread of God that came down from heaven to be the food of the world. It is the Saviour who supplies us with all the spiritual food that is needed by our souls.

The next object mentioned by the apostle is the *χρυσαῖν θυμιάτριον*. Whether this denotes the altar of incense that stood in the holy place, or the censer employed to carry burning incense into the most holy on the great day of annual atonement, the symbolical meaning remains very much the same. The question in either case is, What does incense symbolize? Bæhr (i. 460) supposes it to be a symbol of the Spirit

of God, whose presence fills the whole church, as the odour of incense penetrated every corner of the sanctuary. Most frequently in Scripture prayers and praises are described as what is meant by incense, as when we are told in Rev. v. 8 that the golden vials full of odours are the prayers of saints. These views, however, are not inconsistent; for all acceptable prayers and praises are the breathing of the Spirit in the believer's soul. He maketh intercession for us with groanings, produced by Him in our hearts, that cannot be uttered. And the reason why the incense, though kindled in the holy place, is yet described by the apostle in connection with the most holy, may be, that adoration offered from the heart in this world rises up at once to the immediate presence of God in heaven. The sanctuary above is the central home of praise, whither it converges from all quarters, and where its eternal dwelling-place is to be. Light, life, and adoration are thus the three grand ideas symbolized by the candlestick, the shew-bread, and the incense.

The ark of the covenant stood in the most holy place. It contained the two tables of the law. These were symbols of the perfect righteousness of God. They exhibited the ground principles of His government. They were preserved with scrupulous care, to indicate that His laws were unchangeable. They were placed underneath where He abode, to teach that His throne was founded in justice and judgment; and their being kept in the most holy place, taught that there could be no perfect communion with God without a perfect submission to His authority. We must have the law perfectly written in our hearts before we can enter into the holiest of all.

The mercy-seat was the lid of the ark. It was the place from which God spake to Moses, and therefore it symbolized His authority. It was also the place where expiation was made, and therefore it indicated the divine compassion. Yet, at the same time, it prominently displayed the idea of God's holiness; for it was to be sprinkled with the blood of a victim before pardon could be granted. What important spiritual instruction, therefore, was symbolically imparted by the mercy-seat!

The relative positions, too, of the testimony and the mercy-seat were symbolical of precious truths. The testimony was in the ark, and the mercy-seat was over it. Now, what was

thereby taught to the people? The mercy-seat was God's throne: His government was therefore exhibited as founded upon principles of perfect righteousness. The mercy-seat was the place whence responses came: all revelations, therefore, were shown to have the moral law as their basis. The mercy-seat was the place where pardon was granted: God's compassion, therefore, could only be exercised in such a way as not to infringe upon His law. The mercy-seat never had the testimony taken from under it: no pardon, therefore, granted by God exempted for a moment from the obligation of the moral law. Pardon was never designed to exonerate men from duty, but only to place them in circumstances more favourable to moral training, that in the end, through grace, they might be made perfect in holiness.

The pot of manna and Aaron's rod that budded were objects of historical interest. The vessel was a memorial of God's goodness in providence, and from generation to generation it would make the people feel their dependence upon Him. The manna miraculously provided in the wilderness, could hardly fail at the same time to suggest the idea of bread from heaven needed for the nourishment of the soul. Aaron's rod also was a memorial of the divine appointment of the Jewish priesthood; and it could not fail continually to remind the people of the need of divine authority and of divine help for the right discharge of all priestly functions.

The cherubim of glory are last mentioned. They were figures of gold placed over the mercy-seat, one at either end; and their wings met together above, so as to overshadow it. Now the cherubim are one of the highest orders of created intelligences. The figures, therefore, here described may be viewed as representing the unfallen or sinless creatures of God, and as exhibiting the interest they take in all His plans. They surround His throne above. They perform His pleasure. They are perfectly obedient to His law. They are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to the heirs of salvation. Which things, says Peter, the angels desire to look into.

And now the question presents itself, Of what objects under the gospel were the testimony and the mercy-seat and the cherubim typical? They were typical of the great expiation

to be effected by the death of Christ, of the perfect consistency established by Him between the pardon of the guilty and the justice of the Judge, of His appearance in the presence of God for us in the heavenly world, and of His employment of the angels in works and services connected with the progress of the scheme of redemption. Yes, Christ, having died upon earth, is now within the veil, a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man. And if Aaron's rod and the pot of manna are to be regarded as typical of anything Christian, it must be, in the one case, of the spiritual nourishment which our Lord sends down to us from heaven, and in the other, of the divine appointment of our Lord to the priestly office which He discharges.

Vers. 6, 7. These verses proceed to mention the use made of the two divisions of the tabernacle. The outer apartment, styled *πρώτην σκηνὴν*, as in the 2d verse, was accessible to all the priests, and it was open every day. *Διαπαντός*, corresponding to *יְמֵהָ*, stands opposed to *ἀπαξ τοῦ ἑνιαυτοῦ* in ver. 7, and means "always," or from day to day, like *καθ' ἡμέραν* in chap. x. 11. There were various services performed in the holy place, such as sprinkling the blood of sin-offerings before the veil, trimming the lamps of the candlestick, burning incense upon the altar, and arranging the shew-bread from time to time. *Διεπείας* in the plural is quite classic, and *ἐπιτελεῖν* is the most appropriate verb to connect with it. The description of the tabernacle in vers. 1-5, and the words *τούτων δὲ οὕτω κατεσκευασμένων*, plainly have respect to the tabernacle of ancient times, and not to the temple; and yet the apostle employs the present tense in describing the services of the priesthood. The reason of this must be, that the temple of Jerusalem was still standing when he wrote, and the same services for substance performed in it as Moses had instituted. The present tense recognises the temple services as the legitimate performance of the law of Moses; whereas the past tense would either have disowned it as God's institution at all, or have implied that it had ceased to exist. Bleek says the present tense obliges us to suppose that the apostle regarded all the articles mentioned above as being still in the temple. He might as well have inferred from it that the apostle imagined

the tabernacle itself to be still standing. Consistent with the use of *εἰσίσιν* in the present, is that of the participle perfect *κατεσκευασμένων*. The participle of the aorist would not have suited, for it would have tied you down historically to the time when all these arrangements were first made.

Ver. 7. The most holy place, styled here *δευτέρα σκηνή*, was accessible only to the high priest, and that but once in the year, viz. on the tenth day of the seventh month, which was the great day of annual atonement (Lev. xvi. 29). It has been made a question whether *ἅπαξ* here means one single time, or on one single day. The latter must be its meaning; for it is plain from Lev. xvi. 12, 13, that the high priest first took in the blood of a bullock for himself and his house, and then afterwards took in the blood of a goat for the sins of the people. Twice at least, therefore, he must have entered, and some suppose one or two times more. Jewish tradition speaks of four entrances,—one with the censer of incense, another with the blood of the bullock, a third with the blood of the goat, and a fourth for the purpose of removing the vessels employed (Winer's *Reallex.* ii. 657). The first three of these seem to have a pretty clear scriptural foundation (Lev. xvi. 12–15); and even the verse before us not obscurely points to two of them, for the offerings mentioned were not simultaneous, but consecutive. The negative expression *οὐ χωρὶς αἵματος* is chosen for strength, and indicates the necessity of blood. The priest could not enter without it. The blood of the bullock for himself, and the blood of the goat for the people, he carried within the veil, and sprinkled with his finger upon the mercy-seat eastward, and before the mercy-seat. It was the blood of atonement to expiate his own guilt and the guilt of the people. Priest and people alike were sinners, and needed the exercise of pardoning mercy. The Vulgate, Calvin, Storr, and others, connect *ἐαυτοῦ* with *ἀγνοημάτων* as well as *λαοῦ*; but the position of *τῶν* shows that *ἐαυτοῦ* is governed directly by *ὑπέρ*. The sense, however, is the same in either case; and accordingly in chap. vii. 27 *ἁμαρτιῶν* is so construed as to apply to both parties. Where is the offering of the blood here represented by the apostle as made? Calovius and others contend that *προσφέρει* refers to the bringing of the victim to the altar outside the tabernacle to be killed. But the

priest is described as entering the most holy place with the blood, which, it is added, he offers for himself and the people; and therefore it is plain that the reference here is to the offering of the blood in the immediate presence of God, by sprinkling it upon the mercy-seat. The mere killing of the victim did not complete the sacrifice: the crowning act was the exhibition of the blood before God.

Some have supposed that *ἀγνομάτων* means only sins of ignorance. Other sins, however, are also included. *ἄγνοια* is employed in the Septuagint to represent *דַּעַת*, and *ἀγνόημα* is repeatedly found in the Apocrypha in the sense of sin in general (Judith v. 19; Tob. iii. 3; 1 Macc. xiii. 39). This usage doubtless results from the fact that there is some measure of ignorance in all sin. We go astray, deceived by ourselves, and deceived by the wiles of the devil. The language of Lev. xvi. 16 is quite express as to the kind of sins that were expiated on the great day of annual atonement: "He shall make an atonement because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins." The reason why the apostle uses a mild word in the room of *ἀδικημάτων* and *ἁμαρτιῶν*, employed by the LXX., may be, that in this section his object is purely doctrinal and not paraenetic; and that, speaking of the high priest of the Jews as well as the people, he wishes to avoid whatever would give unnecessary offence, and so prejudice them against the gospel. It would, however, be but a burlesque of glad tidings, to be told that only sins of ignorance could ever be expiated. Were this the case, which of all the children of men in any age could have found acceptance with God? Let us bless the Most High that He does not mock us with a mercy that could be of no use. He is ready to pardon our blackest offences through His Son. "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as the wool."

Ver. 8. This verse is one of great importance, as showing, along with chap. viii. 2 and ix. 12, 24, the solid ground there is for making the old tabernacle typical of objects under the gospel. Having mentioned that the priests went always into the outer apartment, and the high priest alone, and that but once in the

year, into the inner, the apostle proceeds thus: "The Holy Ghost this signifying, or showing," etc. Here it is presupposed that the institutions of Moses were divinely originated, and that they possessed a significance and reach of reference which the Jewish legislator could not himself have contrived, and which perhaps even he might not fully know. The ordinances he established and the laws he wrote came to him from heaven. Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. The apostles most unequivocally affirm the inspiration of the Old Testament; and it is not Moses, or Isaiah, or Jeremiah they hear speaking in it, but it is the Spirit of God.

Τοῦτο is the accusative, governed by *δηλοῦντος*, and not, as Stuart, Ernesti, and Storr affirm, by *διὰ* understood. It has standing in apposition with it the following clause, which defines its reference. *Δηλόω* is employed to express prophetic intimation; also in xii. 27 and 1 Pet. i. 11. *Τὴν τῶν ἁγίων ὁδὸν* is analogous to Matt. x. 5, "the way of the Gentiles," and 2 Sam. xviii. 23, "the way of the plain," and denotes the way leading to the holy place. And by *ἁγίων* itself we must understand heaven, the sanctuary above, where Christ ministers. The apostle is plainly speaking of that which the earthly most holy place typified; for he is referring to that which the Holy Ghost intended by it. The earthly holy of holies is sometimes simply styled *τὰ ἅγια* or *τὸ ἅγιον*, as in Lev. xvi. 23; and so here is the heavenly, as also in ver. 12.

Now the thing affirmed is, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. It did not appear how sinners were to be brought into communion and fellowship with God. Sacrifices of bulls and goats never had the power of expiating sin; and there are passages even in the Old Testament (Ps. xl. 7; 1 Sam. xv. 22) which show that this truth was not altogether unknown. Though Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Moses, and Samuel, and David, were true saints, yet they had but very obscure conceptions of the true ground on which they had been brought into this position. They knew that in some way or other it was connected with the Messiah; but even a child under the gospel has clearer conceptions than they had of the method of reconciliation. There had not arisen a greater than John the Baptist; yet our Lord says, that the least in

the kingdom He was establishing was greater than he. There was not enjoyed of old the same unobstructed access into the immediate presence of God as we now possess through the Redeemer. Types, and shadows, and carnal ordinances, barred the way.

How does the apostle mean to affirm that the obscurity of the way to heaven was indicated by the Holy Ghost through means of the tabernacle? Boehme says, by the fact of there being an outer apartment in front of the inner, which prevented the entrance to the inner from being seen by the people outside. But surely this is far-fetched. The apostle's inference seems rather to be drawn from the studied exclusion of the mass of the priesthood from the innermost apartment. That apartment was typical of heaven, and exclusion from it therefore furnished a most natural type of barred access to heaven. Ebrard denies that this is the ground of the apostle's inference, and maintains that the ground of it is first presented in the two following verses, where the typical character of all connected with the ancient tabernacle is affirmed. That these statements are designed to confirm the apostle's inference, and that they do so in a very striking manner, admits of no doubt; but as little is it to be doubted, that the exclusion of the priesthood, mentioned in the preceding verse, is represented as figuratively indicating that the way to heaven was barred. This idea is suggested by the 7th verse, and it is confirmed by the 9th and 10th. Ebrard (299) grounds his objection upon the doubt, whether the command excluding the priests was exactly coincident in duration with the first tabernacle. But this is quite immaterial. The Jewish institutions continued in force till the crucifixion, and thereafter they had no divine authority nor significance, as was indicated by the miraculous rending of the veil from the top to the bottom (Matt. xxvii. 51).

By the first tabernacle, in this verse, we are not to understand, as in vers. 2 and 6, the outer division of the ancient tabernacle as distinguished from the inner, but the Jewish tabernacle as distinguished from the Christian. It would serve no purpose to define a period by the continuance of the outer apartment particularly, when the inner existed for precisely the same time. De Wette, indeed (204), understanding the first

tabernacle here to mean the outer division, renders the clause, "whilst as yet the regulation continued, that only the outer apartment was accessible to the priests;" but too much supplementing is needed to bring this sense out of the words. It is plainly the Jewish tabernacle as a whole that is meant, to which a contrast is presented in the greater and more perfect tabernacle mentioned in ver. 11. And it was during the continuance of this first tabernacle that the way into the holiest of all was barred,—not the time it remained undestroyed, but the time during which it *had a standing*, as sanctioned by God. The words of the apostle, *ἐχούσης στάσιν*, are chosen with great skill. They are not equivalent to *στήναι*. Their force is well expressed by Theodoret thus: *ἔτι κρατούσης τῆς κατὰ νόμον λατρείας*. This period came to a close with the crucifixion of Christ; and the apostle's words, *πεφανερῶσθαι τὴν ὁδόν*, seem to contain an allusion to the rending of the veil, which then took place, and threw open the earthly most holy place to the gaze of all. From that hour a new order of things was introduced. Reconciliation was completed. No longer were the services of the great day of annual atonement required. No longer was it needful, by exclusion from the holy of holies, to adumbrate the difficulties connected with admission to God's immediate presence, for these difficulties were all removed.

A question here presents itself, whether we are merely taught by the apostle, that the way of access into God's immediate presence was to a great extent unknown under the old economy, or whether it be also implied, that the state of departed believers was in some respects different from what it afterwards became. That saints, when they died, entered into peace and joy, we cannot doubt; but would not their joy be augmented at the fulness of time, and might they not then pass into a position of greater nearness to God? When Christ passed into the heavens, throwing open the way into the holiest of all, would not Abraham, who had looked forward to His day with such keen anticipation, derive some benefit from it? Does not the apostle also, in chap. xi. 39, seem to affirm that ancient believers, after death, reached not so high a position, until they were joined by those who had seen the promises fulfilled? Was the Hades, then, of the old dispensation, in respect of that part of it appropriated to

the righteous, in any degree changed, either as to character or locality, when our Lord died?

Vers. 9-12.—9. This verse develops more fully the figure already exhibited in the 8th. *Παραβολή* means a similitude or comparison. It is applied to a sensible object employed to indicate some truth or principle, as when the parables of our Lord made the events and objects of ordinary life vehicles of moral instruction. It has a wider import than type, which in theological language denotes an object prefigurative of another object posterior to it in time. The construction of *ἦτις* is doubtful. Erasmus and Bengelius take it for *ὅτι*, as referring to the preceding clause, but made feminine by attraction to *παραβολή*. Most view it as relating to *σκηνή*, and make it the subject, while *παραβολή* is taken for the predicate. The objection to this is, that the 8th verse has already unfolded the allegorical meaning of what is said regarding the *σκηνή*, and therefore it seems superfluous to affirm it again. Others, therefore, as Calvin, Böhme, De Wette, make *ἦτις* agree with *παραβολή*, and take the two together for the subject: which figure or allegory, viz. the allegory already unfolded, is to the present time. The figure is the inaccessibility of the inner apartment of the *σκηνή*, and the thing figured is want of completed reconciliation to God, and both are to the present time. Now what is the nature of the affirmation thus made? Some understand it to mean (Ebrard), that the holy place was a figure or type of the present time. But had the present time been the thing figured, we should rather have expected the genitive. *Εἰς* after *παραβολή* does not naturally express the thing represented, but rather indicates the time in reference to which the representation took place. Does the apostle then mean, that the allegory was an allegory for the people of the old dispensation? or does he mean that it was an allegory continuing in force down to his own day? This latter view has everything to support it—the import of *εἰς*, the tense of *προσφέρονται*, and the tense also of *ἐνεστηκότα*. “Then” is a gratuitous supplement of the English translators. And the affirmation thus made by the apostle is a very important one; for some might have imagined the imperfect state described in the 8th verse to have continued only during the tabernacle, but it continued equally

during the temple. The building was changed, but the same general regulations prevailed. The figure spoken of lasted through all ages down to the apostle's day.

Does the apostle then mean to allow, that the regulations of the temple were in force by divine authority even to the time when he wrote? Not exactly so. They were in force only till the crucifixion of Christ. But he uses the present tense, *προσφέρονται*, because it was a historical fact that the offerings continued to be made. Had he said "were offered," his words would have seemed to imply that the offerings *de facto* had ceased. His argument, strictly speaking, has to do only with the time till Christ; but it was not necessary sharply to define this, as the next clause affirms the inadequacy at all times of the sacrifices spoken of.

Weighty authorities, A, B, D, read *καθ' ἣν* instead of *καθ' ὃν*, *ἣν* referring either to *σκηνῆς* or to *παραβολή*; but the common reading undoubtedly is the preferable one. *Ἦν* could only refer to *σκηνῆς*, if *παραβολή* were made the predicate, which is inadmissible; and *ἣν*, referred to *παραβολή*, gives no proper meaning. Besides, *τὸν καιρὸν τὸν ἐνεστηκότα* needs the following clause to define it. What is the import of *κατά*, applied to time? It means during, all through, all down. But *τὸν καιρὸν* does not indicate the whole time of the old dispensation: it only refers to the end of it, which reached to the apostle's day. Yet the thing that is affirmed held good at every period, from the time of Moses downward; and therefore *καθ' ὃν*, during which time, is employed by the apostle, though he is mainly thinking of his own time. The gifts and sacrifices comprehend all kinds of offerings. The apostle having mentioned them as still in use, adds a clause pointing out their imperfection. That clause denotes for substance the same as *μήπω πεφανέρωσθαι*, etc., in the preceding verse. *Δυνάμεναι*, though referring to both *δῶρα* and *θυσίαι*, yet agrees with *θυσίαι*, as being the latter word, and also the one with which the idea of expiation was specially connected. *Τελειῶσαι* denotes placing the worshipper in a position of safety, accomplishing for him all that a sinful being needs, perfectly removing his guilt, and reconciling him to God (see on vii. 11). This the sacrifices of the old law could not do. Their effect, even as

sanctioned by God, was only outward, reaching to the purifying of the flesh (ver. 13). They could not give peace to the conscience. They could not cleanse the soul from guilt. *Συνείδησις* denotes here the moral and spiritual being of man, his inner self, as distinguished from his body; and the phrase *κατὰ συνείδησιν* is added to *τελειῶσαι*, in order to point out the region that must be reached to benefit man as a sinner.

The declaration regarding the inadequacy of the gifts and sacrifices spoken of, holds good for all time, as the reason assigned in the following verse shows. But it is made in the present tense in connection with *προσφέρονται*; and therefore it would have the effect of a solemn warning upon the Jews who still offered sacrifices. By translating this verse in the past tense, though the force of the argument is not destroyed, yet its intended bearing upon the Jews of the apostle's own day is lost sight of.

Ver. 10. Instead of the common reading, *καὶ δικαιομασιν*, most uncial mss. read *δικαιώματα*. Only by supposing this to be the true reading can you properly account for the gender of *ἐπικείμενα*, which otherwise you would expect to be feminine, like *δυνάμεναι*. Besides, it may be objected to *καὶ δικαιομασιν*, that it places the ordinances spoken of upon the same level with *βρώμασιν*, *πόμασιν*, and *βαπτισμοῖς*; whereas it is plainly a generic expression, comprehending them all, and all others of the same kind.

The connection of the 10th verse with the 9th has been very differently estimated. Schlicht, Limborch, Schulz, Ebrard, supply *δυνάμεναι τελειῶσαι* before *μόνον*, thus: Gifts and sacrifices cannot make perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; they can only make perfect in reference to meats, and drinks, and washings, being carnal ordinances imposed for a time. This interpretation might suit, if *βρώμασιν* and *πόμασιν* stood alone; for it supposes these words to mean, not meat-offerings and drink-offerings, but the laws regarding unclean food; but with what propriety can it be said that gifts and sacrifices make perfect in reference to washings? The washings themselves were a means of purification, as well as the gifts and offerings. And even with respect to *βρώμασιν* and *πόμασιν*, it is arbitrary to make them mean the laws touching meats and drinks, and not simply meats and drinks. Doubtless they denote the meat-offerings and the drink-offerings which are spoken of again in chap. xiii. 9, and

which served the same general purpose as the *δῶρά τε καὶ θυσίαι*. Besides, it is not true, as the view under consideration would imply, that sacrifices made expiation only for faults connected with eating, and drinking, and washing.

Others, as Olearius, Starkius, Ernesti, Michaelis, make *μόνον ἐπὶ κ.τ.λ.* qualify *λατρεύοντα*, thus: Gifts and sacrifices cannot make inwardly perfect him that worships only with meats, and drinks, and washings. But this view makes the verse state something very like a contradiction. The worshipper is supposed to offer gifts and sacrifices with the view of obtaining acceptance; and then it is stated that he worships only with meats, and drinks, and washings. Surely he worships with the *δῶρά τε καὶ θυσίαι* as really as with the *βρώματα, πόματα, and βαπτισμοί*.

The proper method of dealing with this passage, is to make the 10th verse co-ordinate with the concluding clause of the 9th. The gifts and sacrifices are first described participially, as not able to make the worshipper inwardly perfect; and then another statement is appended, participially also, regarding their limited duration, apparently with the view of confirming the first statement. Now, in making the latter statement, the apostle brings also into view meats and drinks and washings, which are obviously things of the same genus as the gifts and sacrifices of the 9th verse, though specifically different; and his object in bringing them forward seems to be, to make the insufficiency of the whole class the more obvious. *Ἐπὶ*, therefore, must be viewed, not as describing the identity of gifts and sacrifices with meats and drinks and washings, as our version supposes—"which stood only in meats and drinks, etc.,"—but rather as indicating the connection between all these different things. Gifts and sacrifices take rank alongside of meats and drinks and washings. This use of *ἐπὶ*, in the sense of "with, along with," is not unprecedented (see Winer, 52, p. 468; Wahl, 122). Now these gifts and sacrifices, together with meats and drinks and washings, are described as a burden laid on till the time of reformation. "They were a burden," says Peter (Acts xv. 10), "which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear;" and Paul, viewing them as *ἐπιτελείμενα*, with great propriety specifies the different parts of which the load consists. *Μόνον* must be understood as qualifying what immediately follows, "only to be ranked with meats

and drinks," therefore carnal ordinances imposed till the time of reformation; "gifts and sacrifices only taking rank with meats and drinks," therefore carnal ordinances imposed till the time of reformation. Or perhaps *μόνον* may be viewed as connected with *δικαιώματα*: "only along with meats and drinks, carnal ordinances;" "only carnal ordinances, like meats and drinks, imposed," etc. In either case the various clauses stand in apposition successively with *δὴρά τε καὶ θυσίαι*, and confirm their asserted insufficiency.

Wolfius and De Wette make *μόνον* qualify *ἐπικείμενα*. This, however, is only admissible when you follow the reading *δικαιώμασιν* as co-ordinate with *βρώμασιν*. If *δικαιώματα* be the proper reading, then it, as standing out from *βρώμασιν*, a nominative, in apposition with *δὴρά τε καὶ θυσίαι*, must intercept *μόνον*, and appropriate it; and *ἐπικείμενα* is appended, as agreeing with *δικαιώματα*. The various objects mentioned—gifts, sacrifices, meats, drinks, washings—are all *δικαιώματα σαρκός*, ordinances of the flesh, ordinances relating to the body, arrangements of an external character, which have no power directly to benefit the soul. They cannot make the worshipper inwardly perfect. They can only sanctify to the purifying of the flesh (see ver. 13). The time of reformation denotes the commencement of the Christian era, when these carnal ordinances were to be abolished, and a spiritual economy introduced. Doubtless the apostle, in using the words *καιροῦ διορθώσεως*, has in his mind the account already quoted from Jeremiah (viii. 8), of days coming, when He was to make a new covenant with the house of Israel. Similar words are employed by our Lord in describing the work of His own forerunner, John the Baptist, who began the restoration (Matt. xvii. 11), as had been foretold by Malachi (iii. 1, iv. 5, 6). *Ἀποκατάστασις* and *διόρθωσις*, restoration and rectification, are thus both employed to describe the religious change effected at the fulness of time.

Vers. 11-14 exhibit Christ as a contrast to the Jewish high priest, whose sanctuary (1-5) and services (7-10) have already been described. It has been stated (8) that the arrangements of the old tabernacle symbolically taught that entrance into heaven was barred, and that that figure or allegoric instruction (9) continued down to the apostle's own time. Now, therefore,

we are told that Christ, having come, hath opened up the way into the holiest of all, and accomplished everything that was needed for man's spiritual and eternal welfare.

Vers. 11, 12. Christ is here spoken of as come. *Παραγενόμενος* does not refer specifically to His birth, but rather to the commencement of His public ministry, to His manifestation as the Messiah. Of John in like manner it is said (Matt. iii. 1), "In those days, *παράγινεται*, cometh John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judea." But while John appeared as a preacher, Christ appeared as a priest, an high priest of good things to come. These good things denote the blessings procured by Christ's priestly services, just as the phrases, "God of peace, God of grace," mean, that peace and grace are given by God. Some have supposed, that exclusive reference is made by the apostle to those blessings which the redeemed are to enjoy in heaven. Doubtless these are included among the good things mentioned; but spiritual blessings enjoyed on earth are also included: for the apostle, developing the idea, makes mention in the following verses of redemption and purgation of the conscience. Blessings, therefore, connected with the kingdom of grace, and blessings connected with the kingdom of glory, are both meant. Why, then, are they styled *μελλόντων*? Because they were promised of old. They were predicted as to come with the Messiah. Accordingly we are told (x. 1), that the law had merely a shadow of *τῶν μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν*. And in ii. 5, *οἰκούμενη μέλλουσα* is employed to denote the gospel kingdom (see also vi. 5 and Luke xxiv. 21). There is another reading, *γενομένων*, which implies, that though the blessings were at one time altogether future, they had now begun to be realized: they were come. *Μελλόντων*, however, is the best supported reading, and the apostle might prefer it, both as fitted to express the idea of blessings that were to come, and blessings that still lie treasured up in the future.

Bœhme and Schulz understand *διὰ* before *τῆς μείζονος* as denoting "by means of." This would be the sense of it, if the clause were dependent upon *μελλόντων*; but it plainly looks not backward, but forward to *εἰσῆλθεν*, and therefore the preposition must mean here, "through." The tabernacle spoken of is styled greater and more perfect, as compared with the tabernacle

of Moses already described, which was a type of it. In illustration of its superiority, the apostle describes it as *οὐ χειροποιήτου*. *Χειροποίητον* denotes that which does not exist naturally, but is made by art and man's device; and *οὐ χειροποίητον* is applied to things made by God Himself. It is the same truth that is stated regarding the better tabernacle in viii. 2, where it is styled the tabernacle which the Lord pitched, and not man; and in ix. 24, the Jewish holy places are styled holy places made with hands. Of the meaning of *οὐ χειροποιήτου*, the apostle himself appends an explanation: *τοῦτ' ἐστίν, οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως*. *Κτίσεως* does not here mean building, as if it referred to the Mosaic tabernacle (Beza, Bengel, Storr), but it means creation or world; and the thing affirmed is, that the Christian tabernacle is not formed of materials gathered from this earthly scene. It is a heavenly structure, and it was made by God. To affix to *κτίσις* the unusual sense of building, is inconsistent with the fact, that the whole clause is appended as an explanation, where all plainness is to be expected.

It has been a favourite idea with many (Chrysos., Theod., Theoph., Calvin, Beza, Grot., Bengel, Peirce), that the greater and more perfect tabernacle denotes the body of Christ. In defence of this view, appeal has been made to the words of our Lord, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will build it up again;" and also to Heb. x. 20, where the flesh of Christ is styled *καταπέτασμα*. But this notion is quite unsuitable to the scope of the passage. It would imply that Christ passed through His own body, as a kind of vestibule, into heaven. And would it not also imply, that His body did not enter into the inmost sanctuary? The words, too, *οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως*, would give no inconsiderable support to the hypothesis of the Docetæ, that the body of Christ was not substantial, like the bodies of other men, but a mere phantom.

Another idea, which has met with many supporters (Cajet., C. A. Lapid., Calov., Wolf., Mich., Blasche), is, that the tabernacle under consideration denotes the church militant; and the ground on which this view is defended is, that the church is designated a spiritual temple, and the house of God. But though the expressions *οὐ χειροποιήτου* and *οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως* might be understood as referring to the heavenly origin of conversion

in believers, yet it cannot be said with much propriety that Christ entered through His people into heaven. Now certainly the expressions οὐ χειροποιήτου and οὐ ταύτης τῆς κτίσεως might be interpreted in conformity with this idea; for they might be viewed as referring to the heavenly origin of conversion in believers, "who are born, not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." We have seen, too, that there is ground for supposing the outer apartment of the ancient tabernacle to be a type of the church on earth, and the inner a type of the church in heaven. If, then, you suppose the tabernacle here mentioned to refer specifically to the outer apartment, as distinguished from the inner, then you must suppose the meaning to be, that Christ passed through the church on earth, being connected with it for a time, and then entered into the sanctuary above. But we do not find that the apostle, unfolding the typical import of the ancient tabernacle, dwells at all on what corresponded to the outer apartment of it. He hastens to the inner, with which Christ, as a high priest, was specially connected. And certainly the lofty tone of the 11th verse rather suggests the idea, that it is the Christian tabernacle, as a whole, which is spoken of. The description plainly points to something higher than this world; and doubtless, therefore, the greater and more perfect tabernacle must be viewed as denoting heaven. This is fully confirmed by the contrast exhibited in the 24th verse, where we are told that Christ entered not into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself. What, then, can the tabernacle not made with hands in the 11th verse mean, but heaven? And if it be asked what difference there is between τὰ ἁγία in the 12th verse and τῆς σκηνῆς in the 11th, the reply must be, that σκηνῆς denotes the Christian tabernacle as a whole, and ἁγία the innermost recess of it. Not a few understand by ἁγία the immediate presence of God, and by σκηνὴ the visible heavens, the cloud-carrying sky. To this it may be objected, that the apostle's own contrast to οὐ χειροποιήτου (ver. 24) is heaven itself, where Christ appears in God's presence for us. And besides, it is altogether doubtful whether the outer σκηνὴ of Moses was meant to be a type of the visible heavens.

In ver. 12 we are taught by what means, or with what

appliances, Christ entered into the heavenly sanctuary. What is the force of *διὰ* here? It is argued by Stuart and others, that as, in ver. 7, the high priest is said to have entered not without blood, and, as we are told in Lev. xvi. 14-16, that he sprinkled it upon the mercy-seat, therefore *δι' αἵματος* must mean with blood. The conclusion, however, does not hold good. Rather it becomes a question why the apostle selects a preposition not applied in the same manner to the Levitical offerings. Now the reason seems to be this, that the earthly priest actually carried the blood of slain beasts into the most holy place; but Christ's blood was not carried up to heaven, and literally sprinkled upon the mercy-seat there. The old Lutheran notion of the Saviour's blood being not in His body, but out of His body; and literally presented in heaven, adheres too closely to the analogy of the Levitical offerings. His blood was literally shed upon earth, He being the appointed victim; and it was in virtue of its having been so shed, that He, raised again to life, as being the Priest also, entered into the holiest of all. His appearance there, not indeed carrying His blood that was shed, but bearing the tokens of its effusion in the print of the nails, may be viewed as the consummation of His offering.

Ἐφάπαξ stands opposed to *ἀπαξ τοῦ ἐνιαυτοῦ* in the 7th verse. The Jewish priest entered once in the year with the blood of slain beasts; but Christ entered only once altogether in virtue of the shedding of His own blood. The Levitical offerings did not make real expiation: they only brought sin to remembrance (chap. x. 3); and therefore they were continually repeated. But Christ's offering, infinitely more precious in itself, made effective atonement; and therefore it only required to be presented once. The blood of His one offering hath for ever perfected them that are sanctified.

The force of the last clause has been differently estimated. De Wette and Stuart understand it as describing the result of the Saviour's entrance into heaven. He entered, thereby obtaining eternal redemption; or, He entered, and obtained. This, however, is contrary to the nature of the participle of an aorist, which cannot describe anything that follows the time of the finite verb, but only something that precedes it in the order of causation. The exceptions to this rule are only apparent. Acts

xix. 29 has been supposed an exception: they rushed into the theatre, συναρπάσαντες Γάϊον καὶ Ἀρίσταρχον; but the meaning is, that having seized upon these men, they rushed into the theatre. The meaning also of Heb. xi. 35, ἐτυμπανίσθησαν οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, is, that not having accepted deliverance when offered to them, they were in consequence tortured (Winer's *Grammatik*, 414). It admits of no doubt, therefore, that the words before us mean: Christ entered into heaven, as having obtained eternal redemption. The last clause is not an inference from what goes before, but it gives the reason of a prior statement, and it points specially to ἐφάπαξ. One entrance sufficed, because the redemption was eternal.

Λύτρωσις means redemption, deliverance from bondage, deliverance from the power and punishment of sin, deliverance from hell and the pains of the second death. It is called eternal, because the misery from which it rescues would have lasted for ever. Its consequences are eternal. It is a blessing which nothing can ever render abortive. The expiations of one year were followed among the Jews by similar expiations in succeeding years; but the one expiation of Christ has satisfied justice for ever, and the redemption effected by it is complete and eternal. *Εὐρίσκεσθαι* commonly denotes to find for one's self, to procure for one's own enjoyment, as τὰς ὄνους τοῦ πατρὸς ἐπιζητῶν, βασιλείαν εὐρατο (Greg. Stephens, *Lex.* 3913), πάππου δόξαν ἀρετῆς μεγάλης εὐραμένου. Christ, however, needed not redemption for Himself. He purchased it solely for the benefit of others. Why, then, is a participle of the middle voice here employed? It can only be to express the idea that He procured it by His own efforts. He earned it of Himself, not "für sich," as De Wette renders the word (p. 207). The middle voice sometimes expresses the idea of doing a thing from one's own resources (Kühner's *Greek Gram.* ii. 13), though it may not be for one's own benefit. Perhaps this shade of thought may not elsewhere be found in connection with *εὐρίσκεσθαι*, but it must be the idea expressed in the passage before us. It was to others Christ became the author of eternal salvation (chap. v. 9). It was not Himself, but others, whom He redeemed. And both the noun *λύτρωσις* and the verb *λυτρόω* are always employed in the New Testament to denote deliver-

ance from sin and its punishment. The meaning therefore of the concluding clause is: having obtained by His own efforts eternal redemption for His people. The last idea, however, is not expressed by the apostle; and therefore the words "for us" appended by our translators, though correct enough in themselves, are an addition which ought not to have been made to the text.

Vers. 13-15. Having in vers. 9, 10 affirmed the inability of the Levitical offerings to cleanse the conscience, and having also in vers. 11, 12 declared that Christ's offering had procured eternal redemption, the apostle in vers. 13, 14 exhibits the two offerings in fuller contrast, and points out the kinds of expiation which they were respectively fitted to make. Sacrifices of beasts were a suitable means of removing ceremonial defilement. The sacrifice of Christ was adapted to cleanse the conscience from the guilt of sin. And not only did Christ's sacrifice take a higher aim, but it also took it with better effect. It was infinitely better adapted to answer its purpose than the Levitical offerings were to answer even theirs. Their effect depended entirely upon divine appointment, but there was in Christ's offering an intrinsic suitableness for the end it contemplated. The apostle refers his conclusion to the common sense of his readers. "How much more?" On the one hand you have brute beasts, unconscious of the purpose for which they are brought to the altar, whose highest perfection lies in bodily form; on the other you have a rational Being, spotless in soul, God's own Son, who spontaneously offers Himself in the room of the guilty. Is there not here a striking commensurateness of the means to the end?

As it is the Jewish high priest with whom the apostle is comparing Christ, he mentions specially the blood of bulls and goats, as these were the offerings presented on the great day of annual atonement, the former for the priests and their families, and the latter for the whole congregation (Lev. xvi. 11-19). Priests and people alike needed mercy from God. How different is it with our High Priest! The bulls and goats of the 13th verse correspond to the goats and calves of the 12th, *ταῦρος* and *μόσχος* being frequently interchanged by the Seventy, and employed to represent the same Hebrew words. Another rite of a very peculiar kind is mentioned, not connected specially

with the great day of annual atonement, viz. the sprinkling of the ashes of a red heifer mingled with water upon the unclean (Num. xix.). The reason, doubtless, why this observance is brought into view is, that it was particularly designed for those who had contracted defilement by touching a dead body; and this defilement furnishes a striking symbol of those dead works from which the apostle says Christ's blood cleanses the soul. Of these various offerings and rites it is affirmed that they sanctify to the purifying of the flesh. *Ἀγιάζει* denotes the act of removing uncleanness, and *πρὸς τὴν τῆς σαρκὸς καθαρότητα* points out the extent to which the removal went. It went only the length of producing outward cleanness. *Πρὸς* does not signify "in respect of," as Stuart alleges; but it points to the end or result of the process described by the verb. *Ἀγιάζει* has both *αἷμα* and *σποδὸς* for nominatives, not conjointly, as if the two in connection had been necessary to cleanse, but separately, because each served this purpose by itself, and therefore the verb is put in the singular. The meaning is, not that blood and ashes sanctify, but that blood sanctifies, and that water mingled with ashes sanctifies.

The ceremonial purgation effected by these and other rites was quite a different thing from common cleansing of the body. Indeed, the means of it, blood and the ashes of a burnt heifer, would rather soil the skin. Ceremonial uncleanness consisted in the violation of any of the numerous forms and laws that were prescribed by the Jewish code; and it was designed as a symbol of moral defilement. The removal, again, of ceremonial defilement was effected by ritual observances; and these also were designed as a type of the means of cleansing the soul from the guilt of sin. Persons ceremonially unclean were debarred from joining in the services of the tabernacle; but after their purgation they were again permitted to join the congregation, and others could hold intercourse with them without scruple.

The 14th verse describes the transcendent efficacy of the offering of Christ. As it was the blood of sacrifices in which their expiating power was conceived to lie (Lev. xvii. 11), the blood of Christ is here represented as the cleansing element. And various circumstances are mentioned with the view of elevating our ideas of its preciousness and sufficiency. The

Saviour offered Himself. The victims of old were offered by others, being dumb beasts themselves; but Christ was both priest and victim, and He acted with the full consent of His own will at every stage of His work on earth. When did the offering here described take place? It is a favourite notion with many—Grotius, Limborch, Stuart—that it took place in heaven; for, say they, Christ entered into heaven—as the high priest entered into the holy of holies—with blood, and His offering was not complete till He appeared before God. But *προσφέρειν* is the word descriptive of the bringing of the victim to the altar, as is plain from the addition *ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον* so frequently made both in the Septuagint and in the New Testament (Lev. i. 15; Matt. v. 23), and also from the circumstances of the narrative even where this phrase is not appended. Besides, the aorist *προσήνεγκεν* carries back the mind to a period prior to the effusion of the blood spoken of, and therefore can only refer to the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. The same thing appears from the word *ἄμωμον*, which manifestly contains an allusion to the qualities required in beasts employed as sacrifices. They were to be unblemished before they were slain. Not a spot, not a wound, must appear in them. Knife must never have touched their skin. Now the analogous feature in Christ is, that He was morally perfect, holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. But this moral perfection must not be conceived as existing in Him only after His exaltation to glory. It existed before He was brought to the altar, and it was that which fitted Him for being a sacrifice. If, with Limborch and Bleek, you make *ἄμωμον* refer to His perfection in heaven, to His elevation above the casualties of this world, then you destroy the typical correspondence between the freedom from blemish required in the ancient sacrifices and His perfect moral purity, before He was brought to the altar; and you suggest the false idea, that it was only when He ascended up on high that He became free from all stain.

The offering of Christ, we are told, was made *διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου*. It is exceedingly difficult to determine the true signification of this phrase. Some—Storr, Döderlein, Stuart—understand it to mean the immortal life to which Christ was raised after His crucifixion, His glorified condition in heaven; and the

import of the whole clause is supposed to be, that in this state He presented Himself before God as the high priest of the church : *Intelligitur hic dignitas oblationis, quod eam facit is, qui jam spiritu et corpore erat immortalis.* But this view is altogether inadmissible, both because the words *διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου* cannot without manifest violence be conceived as meaning “in His state of immortal life,” and also because *προσήμεν* must refer, as we have seen, to what took place in this world. Others suppose *διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου* to be descriptive of the disposition which actuated Christ when He made His offering. The bulls and goats of the old law had no conception of the purpose to which they were devoted, and even the priests performed their part in a very mechanical manner. But Christ willingly gave Himself up to death. He was actuated by a spirit of intense love, which made Him disregard all difficulties and sufferings. Earthly benefactors have often encountered great dangers to save men from temporal ruin ; but Christ’s love infinitely transcended every earthly affection, and aimed to save from eternal death. By this immortal disposition of benevolence, or under the impulse of infinite love, He offered Himself as a sacrifice to God. Now these ideas undoubtedly are correct in themselves, but they are not the ideas which the words before us are fitted to express. Only by doing violence to the language of the apostle, and adding to it, can you make *πνεῦμα αἰώνιον* mean a spirit of infinite and eternal love.

Another view, which has been adopted by many—Capellus, Beza, Aretius, Wolf, Cramer, Carpzov, Ernesti—is, that *πνεῦμα αἰώνιον* means the divine nature of Christ. And in defence of this view it is said, that a reference to the Saviour’s superhuman dignity is most pertinent to the apostle’s argument. If He had been merely a man, however perfect and spotless, His sacrifice could not have been possessed of infinite value. It was His divinity which gave surpassing worth to His substitution. Now this is a great truth, and the first chapter of this epistle shows the importance which the apostle attached to the dignity of Christ’s person. But the words *πνεῦμα αἰώνιον* do not seem sufficiently definite to express the idea of eternal divinity or Godhead. It is said, indeed, that *πνεῦμα* bears this sense in Rom. i. 4, 1 Pet. iii. 18, 1 Tim. iii. 16 ; but this is by no means clear.

It is fully as doubtful in these passages as in the one before us. Besides, it is not true that it was only because Christ was divine that He continued without spot in His human nature. His holiness as a man is nowhere ascribed to the fact of His being God. If this had been the case, then He would have been no proper example to us; yea, His spotlessness would rather have been a discouragement, because, as we could never hope to become gods, freedom from sin would have appeared for ever placed beyond our reach. And further, we are nowhere told that Christ's divinity supported His humanity under the sufferings of the cross. That His divinity gave infinite worth to His sacrifice is undoubted, but it did not stand along with His human nature in helping to bear the penalty of the law. If you suppose this, you deprive His sufferings of all their severity. Rather must we conclude that His human nature upon the cross had no other support than human beings may always expect when they are suffering in a righteous cause. Else why the exclamation, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" Surely if His own divinity aided him in making His offering, He needed no other support. On every ground, therefore, it seems plain that *διὰ πνεύματος αἰωνίου* cannot mean through His own eternal divinity.

The view which has always most prevailed in the church is, that *πνεῦμα αἰώνιον* here means the Holy Ghost. This view offers no violence to the language. *Πνεῦμα* without the article is often employed in this sense, as in Acts i. 2; and with *διὰ* it is often employed to describe the Spirit as the means, or instrument, or help through which something is done. It has been objected, indeed, that the Spirit contributed nothing to the death of Christ (Ernesti, 767). True, it was His own love that impelled the Saviour to offer Himself; but the Spirit supported Him, as He supports all who devote themselves to God. The Spirit, as the principle of all holiness in created beings, dwelt in Christ's human nature, which was a created nature. It was by the power of the Holy Ghost Christ was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary. The Spirit came down upon Him at His baptism. He was anointed by the Spirit to preach the gospel to the poor. He was filled with the Spirit above measure. Can we imagine, then, that the Spirit, who was with Him all His

life long, by whose help He was enabled to preach the gospel, and by parity of reasoning to perform all the other functions of His office, would desert Him at the hour of His greatest need? No; as it was through the Spirit He preached the gospel, made choice of His apostles (Acts i. 2), wrought miracles, so it was through the Spirit He offered Himself unto God. The only point remaining for consideration is, why *αἰωνίου* should have been employed instead of the more usual *αἰῶνι*. Some authorities indeed read *αἰῶνι*, but the decided preponderance of evidence is in favour of the common reading; and you can easily see why *αἰῶνι* might creep in, though you cannot account for the appearance of *αἰωνίου* but on the supposition of its being the true reading. And this word might be chosen by the author as in harmony with the eternity of the effects ascribed by him to the offering of Christ, eternal redemption (ver. 12), eternal inheritance (ver. 15), by which it was illustriously distinguished from the continually repeated offerings of the law.

As the offering of Christ was so different from those presented under the law, it could not but be attended with very different effects. Its efficacy was both greater and of a higher kind. It cleansed, not from ceremonial defilement, but from moral guilt. It purged the conscience from dead works. These words some understand to mean works prescribed by the ceremonial law. But the expression takes a much wider sweep. It includes all works of law. And why are they styled dead? Some say because they lead to death as their punishment. The true reason, however, rather is, because they proceed from dead hearts. It is their origin, and not their consequence, that is the ground of the designation. The individual on whom the ashes of the burnt heifer were sprinkled had become unclean from contact with a dead body; and after the same analogy, the works here mentioned are called dead on account of their connection with a dead soul. Men have no principle of love to God. They live only to themselves, and their whole conduct is devoid of spirituality. Not only are the acts of wickedness they commit dead works, but their best deeds in their natural state are also dead. They fall infinitely short of the law's demand, and they have no power of procuring acceptance. All dependence upon such works must be abandoned, and we must put our trust in

Christ, whose blood will purge us from the defilement of sin. The guilt of all our works, whether more flagrantly opposed to the law or only falling short of its requirements, He will wash away, and we shall be accepted on the ground of His sacrifice. Our conscience, our inner man, shall be made clean. Is it justification or sanctification that is expressed by *καθαριεῖ*? Manifestly it is justification, but it is a justification which necessarily originates sanctification. The same Spirit which enables to believe in Christ, at that very moment puts a new life in the soul; and when the burden of guilt is taken away, we are prepared for entering upon a new career. The purged conscience is fitted for the service of God. The Israelite defiled by the touch of a dead body, could not enter the congregation till he was ceremonially purified. So the sinner is unfit to approach into God's presence till his conscience be cleansed. But let this once be done, and he is prepared for a new life. Gratitude impels him, the new nature he has received impels him, the buoyancy of an unburdened conscience impels him, to serve the living God. *Δατρεύειν* is here employed in the same sense and connection as *δουλεύειν* in 1 Thess. i. 9. The Romish idea, that the former of these words denotes a worship which must be rendered to God only, and the latter a worship which may be rendered to creatures also, is utterly without foundation (Suiceri, *Thes. Eccles.* ii. 216). Why is the epithet *ζῶντι* here used? It is suggested by *νεκρῶν ἔργων*, and it indicates that the genuine believer does not merely look to precepts and forms in regulating his life, but realizes the presence of an ever-living and watchful God. He obeys not an abstract principle, but a personal and present intelligence. His service takes a higher aim than it did formerly; and he feels that works which he once imagined to be vitally good are really dead and worthless, as scanned by the piercing eye of the all-seeing Jehovah.

Vers. 1-10 describe minutely the sanctuary and services of the old covenant, and show that they pointed to something more perfect than themselves. Vers. 11-14 exhibit Christ as a high priest purging the conscience from sin with His own blood, and thus performing functions of a higher kind than any of His predecessors. In this superiority of the Redeemer is found (vers. 15-23) a reason for what had been said in chap. viii. 6 regard-

ing His being mediator of a better covenant. Well is that covenant styled a new one by Jeremiah. It is vastly superior to the old one, and, like the old one, it is confirmed by blood.

Διὰ τοῦτο does not look forward to *ὅπως* (Bœhme, Stengel, Ebrard), as if the meaning were, "He is Mediator of a new covenant, 'to the end that;'" but it looks back to what had been said in vers. 11–14. The superiority there affirmed to belong to the offering of Christ over all the offerings of the law, is employed to confirm what had been said in chap. viii. 6 and by Jeremiah. The Saviour's excellences show that the covenant of which He was Mediator was of a totally different kind from the Mosaic. It was a new institution, to which nothing similar had ever existed. He did not merely succeed to Moses and Aaron to superintend institutions established by them, but He came to found institutions of His own. His advent was a time of reformation. Old things passed away, and all things became new (2 Cor. v. 17). Christ's work accomplished what the services of the old covenant could not do, and therefore now there is a new covenant, and He is its Mediator. See on chap. viii. 6.

As *διὰ τοῦτο*, looking backwards, brings into view Christ's qualifications for being Mediator, so *ὅπως*, looking forward, states the purpose of His appointment. It was to bless the chosen with eternal life. A clause, however, is thrown in (*θανάτου . . . παραβάσεων*) as a kind of repetition of what *διὰ τοῦτο* refers to, reminding the reader that it was the Saviour's death which was the grand instrument of His power to bless, and at the same time making a statement regarding the relation of His death to bygone ages: His death being, or having taken place, *εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν τῶν παραβάσεων*, for the redemption of transgressions, for redemption from transgressions, for deliverance from their guilt and punishment. *Ἐπὶ τῇ πρώτῃ διαθήκῃ*, in the time of the first covenant, under the first covenant.

Why should transgressions committed during the old economy be specially referred to by the apostle? Because he has shown that none of its own sacrifices had any power to cleanse the conscience from guilt. The most sedulous worshipper only gained from them an outward and carnal purgation. Were the pious of the olden time, then, to be left for ever under the burden of their guilt? By no means. When they observed

the prescribed ceremonials of the law with faith, they received what these ceremonials of themselves had no power of giving—the blessings that were connected with the Messiah's death. Whether these blessings were fully bestowed upon them in their own day, in anticipation of what Christ was to do, or whether they were partly bestowed then, and fully when the Saviour actually came, is a question of some difficulty. But certain it is, that whatever spiritual blessings were conferred upon ancient believers, whether in their lifetime or after their decease, all came to them from the mediation of Christ. His death was designed for the redemption of transgressions under the first covenant. The same sentiment is expressed by Paul in Rom. iii. 25. God passed by the sins of His people under the law; but His righteousness in doing so was not manifested till Christ died as a propitiation for sin. This great event threw its blessings back upon all preceding times. Not posterity merely, but ancestors, were benefited by the self-denying scenes of Calvary. The river of mercy flowed backwards from the cross to the creation, as well as onwards to the end of the world. A light comes from Christ to illuminate our path, and to illustrate the course of providence from the commencement of time.

The last clause of the verse brings into view the blessings bestowed by Christ as Mediator of a new covenant. *Οἱ κεκλημένοι* denotes the called. It is equivalent to *κλήσεως ἐπουρανίου μέτοχοι* in chap. iii. 1. It does not mean those merely to whom the invitations of mercy are addressed, but those who receive them in faith. It denotes, in short, genuine believers, called, and faithful, and chosen. Some suppose *κεκλημένοι* to stand in government with *τῆς αἰωνίου κληρονομίας*, and make the phrase mean, those called to an eternal inheritance. This is a somewhat awkward construction. It is better to view *ἐπαγγελίαν* as the word that governs *κληρονομίας*. The distance between them is no objection, for this epistle abounds with passages where a leading and sonorous word is reserved for the close (vii. 4, 22). Another objection has been offered to this construction (Ebrard, 316), that according to it you must make *ἐπαγγελίαν* denote, not "thing promised," but "promise," and thus bring out an unsuitable thought, as the mere *promise* had already been possessed for many ages, and did not require to be received. This objec-

tion, however, is groundless. The connection of *ἐπαγγελίαν* with *κληρονομίας* no more obliges you to make it mean simple promise, than the separation of them would do. *Ἐπαγγελίαν* denotes here, as in chap. vi. 12, 17, x. 36, xi. 13, 33, 39, the blessing promised; and the genitive *κληρονομίας* is not a genitive designating the object, but the matter of the promise. The whole expression means the promised blessing of an eternal inheritance. *Κληρονομία* is equivalent to *σωτηρία* in chap. ii. 10, vi. 9, ix. 28. And this inheritance or salvation is eternal; not merely long, but everlasting. It springs from a redemption that is eternal (ver. 12); it is wrought out through a Spirit who is eternal (ver. 14).

As the apostle mentions particularly transgressions under the first covenant, are we bound to suppose it is Jews only he is referring to when he speaks of the called receiving an eternal inheritance? Now, suppose we were shut up to this view, that would be no reason for supposing the blessings of the new covenant to be confined to Jews. Other passages exhibit the riches of God's grace to Gentiles. There is an efficacy in the blood of Christ which can never be exhausted. Its virtue reached back to the commencement of the world, and it shall extend to the end of time. It was first exhibited in Judea, but it is destined to spread itself over all the earth. With undiminished splendour shall the Sun of righteousness shine till the last sands of time have run. But there is no necessity for supposing the last clause of the verse to have the same restricted reference as the one before it. The middle clause is thrown in, not to limit, but to extend, the application of the final statement. Suppose the middle clause omitted, and then you would conclude it was only parties under the new covenant who could be saved, and the saints of ancient times would all appear excluded from glory. To render his language incapable of such an interpretation, the apostle throws in a clause declaring that Christ's death expiated offences under the old covenant. The called, therefore, must include all believers, whether before or after the fulness of time. But if it would be contrary to the second clause to exclude Jewish believers from the *οἱ κεκλημένοι*, it would be equally contrary to the first clause to exclude believers under the new covenant. Can you imagine the apostle to say that Christ is

Mediator of a new covenant, that not those called under it, but those called under the old covenant, might be saved? No: his meaning is, that Christ is Mediator of a new covenant, that those called under that covenant might be saved; and not only so, but—His death having a retrospective influence—that the saints of all times might enjoy eternal life. It was always the case when new covenants were made between parties, that if covenants had existed between them before, violations of those old covenants were redressed and forgiven, and the new covenants became the basis of future intercourse and relations. The validity of these new covenants, however, did not rest wholly upon the rectification of breaches of old ones. Such rectification was a subsidiary point. The new covenants stood mainly upon stipulations of their own. So the Christian covenant did not derive its efficacy from the mere fact of its looking backward. That was a feature of it, but not its essential characteristic. One ground of the misapprehension prevailing regarding this verse, is the supposition that the last clause is an inference from the second. It is not an inference from the second, but from the first; and the second is thrown in to extend the range of the conclusion. It is because Christ is Mediator of a new covenant that believers are saved; and it is because His death has a retrospective influence, that ancient Jewish believers share the precious blessing.

Loëffler and Reiche infer from this passage, and from Rom. iii. 25, that the gospel was only intended to expiate offences committed before conversion. The inference is grounded upon utter misapprehension. It is not sins committed by individuals before conversion that are spoken of, but sins committed by Jews prior to the advent of Christ; and if any inference were drawn from the past to the future at all, it should rather be, that no sins committed subsequently to the time of Christ were pardonable. But both conclusions are equally groundless. They proceed upon the principle, that a statement regarding the past excludes the possibility of the same thing being true regarding the future, as if a man could not affirm that the sun rose yesterday without being held as denying that it would rise to-morrow. The whole word of God demonstrates that believers may receive pardon for the offences they commit. Was not David pardoned

in the matter of Uriah? Did not Peter receive forgiveness for his denial of Christ? Does not John say, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins?" Indeed, were the gospel only to forgive sins committed before conversion, it would be utterly worthless, for every Christian must allow that he needs forgiveness every day.

Vers. 16-19. The apostle has shown that the offering of Christ was of much greater value than the offerings of bulls and goats made under the law. They accomplished merely the removal of ceremonial defilement, but His sacrifice purges the conscience from the guilt of sin. On this ground it is concluded that our Lord is Mediator of a new covenant, which is also styled (vii. 22, viii. 6) a better covenant; and it is declared that His death extended its efficacy to transgressions under the first covenant, so as to secure eternal life for all believers. Even Moses was made an heir of glory on the ground of Christ's work.

Vers. 16, 17. The meaning of these verses has been much contested. The main question is, whether *διαθήκη* should be viewed as meaning covenant or testament. Pierce, Michaelis, Steudel, Macknight, M'Lean, Tholuck, Ebrard, defend the former view; Calvin, Böhme, Stuart, and others, take the latter. On either supposition there are great difficulties, which cannot be altogether removed. The common signification of the word in classic authors is disposition, latter will, testament; and in some rare cases, as in Aristoph. *Aves*, 439, it denotes a paction or covenant; but the word ordinarily employed to express the idea of compact is *συνθήκη*. The usage, however, is altogether different in Hellenistic Greek. The Seventy have only used *συνθήκη* some three or four times in all, and never as the representative of *בְּרִית*. They commonly employ *διαθήκη* as the rendering of *בְּרִית*; and in no case, though they have used this word nearly three hundred times, do they make it signify a will. The same usage has passed into the New Testament, and *διαθήκη* is the word always employed to denote a covenant. *Συνθήκη* never occurs there at all.

It seems, therefore, as if we were shut up to the conclusion, that *διαθήκη* must here mean covenant. Beyond all question, this is the signification of it in the context. It is a covenant,

and not a testament, that is spoken of in vers. 15, 18, 19, 20. That ver. 15 refers back to viii. 6-8 is plain, and there the apostle treats of a covenant; for the passage he quotes is from Jeremiah, where the original word is בְּרִית. The use of *μεσίτης*, too, and *τῇ πρώτῃ*, in ver. 15, as in viii. 6, 7, places it beyond all question, that covenant is the meaning there. Then again, in vers. 18-20, it being the special institution set up by Moses that is spoken of, there can be no doubt that *διαθήκη*, in the sense of covenant, is the word to be supplied. The first covenant is spoken of as a known thing; and the passage referred to for further information regarding it is Ex. xxiv. 6-8, where the inauguration of God's covenant with the Jews is minutely described. Is it not, then, unnatural to suppose that the word *διαθήκη* should bear the very different acceptance of testament in two intermediate verses? Certainly, if the signification of covenant can at all meet the exigencies of vers. 16 and 17, it must be retained. Nothing but the impossibility of making any tolerable sense by means of it, will warrant the adoption of another meaning.

These are very strong considerations; but there are considerations also of great weight on the other side. If you view *διαθήκη* as denoting covenant in vers. 16 and 17, it is difficult to assign any suitable signification to *διαθεμένου* and *διαθέμενος* in the same verses. *Διάθεσθαι διαθήκην* is of frequent occurrence both in the classics and in Scripture, and it always signifies either to make a covenant or to make a will. In the classics it commonly denotes to make a will; but sometimes also, as in the passage of Aristophanes referred to, to make a covenant. In the Scriptures, on the other hand, it always means to make a covenant, as in Gen. xv. 18, xxxi. 44, Deut. v. 2, 3, Heb. viii. 10, etc. What, then, must be the signification of the participles *διαθεμένου* and *διαθέμενος*? If you make *διαθήκη* mean "will," then the participle of 2 aor. mid. must denote the maker of a will, a testator. But if you assign to *διαθήκη* the sense of covenant, then *διαθέμενος* must signify one who has made a covenant. In the verses before us, however, it is impossible for it to mean the maker of a covenant; for who ever heard of the principle, that covenants are not binding until the parties making them are dead? If you hold by the idea of

covenant, then you must make *διαθέμενος* refer to the victim slain at the making of it ; but such a reference is inconsistent with the usage of the language. In all writers, sacred and profane, *διαθέσθαι* is applied to the persons entering into covenant, but never to the ratifying sacrifice. The gender, too, of *ὁ διαθέμενος*, naturally points to the person making the *διαθήκη* : we should have expected the neuter gender, if the victim *θῦμα ζών* had been the thing referred to. Tholuck, indeed, alleges that the use of the masculine may be accounted for, on the ground that the victim in the case of the new covenant was a man ; but this argument is not conclusive, for the 16th and 17th verses do not refer to the new covenant specifically, but to covenants in general, if they refer to covenants at all. Further, the words *ἐπὶ νεκροῖς* are said to be inconsistent with the idea of a covenant ; for in that case they would require to be viewed as meaning dead sacrifices. But though *νεκρὸς* is applied to beasts as well as to men (Eccles. ix. 4), yet, when it stands without a substantive, it is applied only to human beings, used only with reference to human beings. Besides, it was not a universal custom, even among the Jews, for covenants to be confirmed by sacrifice, as is obvious from Gen. xxiii. 16, xxiv. 9, Deut. xxv. 7, 9, Ruth iv. 7. But what is affirmed in the verses before us respecting *διαθήκη* is laid down as a universal proposition : where a *διαθήκη* is, a death must give it confirmation. Now all these difficulties, it is said, disappear when you take *διαθήκη* in the sense of latter will. *Διαθεμένου* and *διαθέμενος* indicate the party making the will : *νεκροῖς* means dead men ; and it is universally true, that the maker of a will must die before it can come into operation.

By those who prefer the sense of testament in the 16th and 17th verses, the apostle is conceived as led, by the mention of an inheritance in the 15th verse, to the use of *διαθήκη* in a signification which it nowhere else has in Scripture. The classic meaning of the word is remembered by him ; and he illustrates his subject by the analogy which it suggests. The Mediator of the new covenant died, and the called in consequence receive an eternal inheritance. The same thing happens in the case of wills : the testator dies, and then the disposition he has made takes effect. It is thus merely a passing reference that is made

to wills for the sake of illustration ; and the precise point of the comparison lies in the ratifying power of death. And even were you to view the gospel as here formally designated a will, it is said, that with all the differences existing between human testaments and Christ's provision for His people, there is still a sufficiency of resemblance between them to warrant their being called by the same name. In the *first place*, the blessings secured for us by Christ are designated *κληρονομία*. Eternal life is the inheritance of God's people. It is a treasure laid up for them in the skies. It is an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. In the *second place*, there is a written description of the blessings destined for us ; and a copy of this document, duly authenticated, has been put into our hands, which points out the parties who have the privilege of being heirs. In the *third place*, those who are to receive the inheritance are actually styled *κληρονόμοι* : they are the children of God, therefore heirs, " heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" (Rom.-viii. 17). And in the *last place*, the party who secures the inheritance for His people, dies to establish their right to it. It is the unvarying doctrine of Scripture, that without the death of Christ there could have been no hope of future blessedness for sinful man. These facts, it is said, constitute a sufficient ground on which to apply to the gospel the designation of a testament or will.

Now certainly there is very considerable force in the foregoing reasonings. They make it plain, that the gospel might with sufficient propriety be styled a testament. It may be questioned, however, not to mention the great argument against this view grounded upon the usage of *διαθήκη*, whether the idea of a will suits all the exigencies even of the 16th and 17th verses. For the apostle is not speaking in them of carrying out the provisions of a *διαθήκη*, but of making one. Now, though it be clear that a will cannot be carried into effect till after the death of the testator, yet it may, yea must, exist in all its completeness before that event. It is valid the moment it is signed before witnesses. Not its validity, but its execution, waits the testator's death. It is otherwise, however, with a covenant. The requisite death or shedding of blood took place, not at the performance of the covenant, but at the first making of it ; and

it was not valid till the sacrifice was duly offered. Does not this consideration rather show, that the idea of a covenant suits the 16th and 17th verses better than that of a will?

Another argument of great force in favour of the sense of covenant is supplied by the manner in which the 18th verse, which undoubtedly speaks of a covenant, is appended to the 17th as a conclusion: *ὅθεν*, whence or wherefore. Now, surely the fact that a testator must die before his will can come into operation, furnishes no reason at all why the Mosaic covenant should have been ratified with the blood of slain beasts. The only way of evading this objection, is to make the 16th and 17th verses a kind of parenthesis, and to view the 18th as standing in argumentative connection with the 15th: Christ died as mediator, and in like manner the first covenant was dedicated with blood. But surely it were much more satisfactory if the 16th and 17th verses could be brought into the stream of argument; and they do fall quite naturally into it when you give *διαθήκη* the signification of covenant throughout. The 15th verse exhibits Christ as dying to ratify the new covenant; the 16th and 17th lay down the general principle, that covenants were wont to be confirmed by blood; and then the 18th states that, in exact conformity with all this, the first covenant was also dedicated by means of sacrifice.

The only arguments of decided weight in favour of the sense of testament, are those grounded upon *ὁ διαθέμενος* and *νεκροῖς*. These it is difficult to set aside. Still they are not sufficient to neutralize the vast amount of evidence on the other side. You have but a choice of difficulties; and take what view you please, something will be left perplexed and unsatisfactory. With regard to *νεκροῖς*, no doubt it is true that, standing by itself, it is not found applied to any but human beings, though, with a substantive expressed, it is used to designate any dead creature. We must then just suppose that the apostle, having been speaking so much of bulls and goats, and goats and calves, employed *νεκροῖς* to denote dead animals, and left the word for animals to be supplied. With regard to *ὁ διαθέμενος* the difficulty is greater. Macknight's rendering, viz. the appointed sacrifice, will not stand the test; for the participle belongs not to the passive voice, but to the middle, and therefore it must

have the force of an active verb. The gender, too, is the source of no little difficulty. Were the word neuter, it might be understood, without any departure from propriety, as denoting the victim which confirms or ratifies a covenant. Ebrard supposes (322) the 16th and 17th verses to be designedly enigmatical, and makes their meaning to be, that where a sinner enters into covenant with God, he must himself die to sin, and die also by means of a victim dying for him. He must die figuratively himself, and he must die literally by substitute. This is not at all satisfactory. Perhaps a modification of Tholuck's idea may furnish a way of escape from the difficulty. He supposes the victim to be personified, and viewed as the *μεσίτης* of the covenant; and thus he accounts for the masculine gender. But the victim of a covenant was not necessarily the same as the *μεσίτης*. They coincided in the case of the new covenant, but not of the old, nor of covenants generally. We may suppose, however, merely that, as the victim mentioned in the 15th verse was a person, the apostle, speaking of a covenant generally in the next verse, personifies the victim, and therefore writes *ὁ διαθέμενος*. This phrase, then, might be rendered "ratifier," that is, the victim that confirms or ratifies the covenant.

On the supposition, then, that "covenant" is the meaning of *διαθήκη* throughout, what is the course of the apostle's argument in vers. 15-18? First the death of Christ, as mediator of a new covenant, is affirmed. Then a general principle is laid down regarding the ratification of covenants by the death of victims; and finally it is declared, that, in harmony with these facts, the first covenant also was inaugurated by blood. We are not, however, to imagine that the death of our Lord took place, merely because it was the practice of God to ratify covenants with blood in ancient times. We cannot suppose that the necessity for His death was of exactly the same nature as the necessity for the sacrifice of bulls and goats at the dedication of the old covenant. It would be but a blind logic that would place these things upon a level. Undoubtedly the necessity for Christ's death must be viewed as the fundamental necessity, totally different in kind from the necessity of sacrificing beasts under the old law. The necessity for these sacrifices, whether presented as sin-offerings, or as victims for the

ratification of covenants, was altogether subordinate and relative. They were necessary simply as prefigurations of Christ's death. Still, the fact of their having been appointed by divine authority, and enjoined as indispensable, furnished a solid basis of argument, particularly in reasoning with Jews, to establish the sacrificial character of Christ's death, and to reconcile them to the idea that He had died as the ratifying victim of a new covenant. Why should they doubt it? Had not God made similar ratifications of all former covenants? And if the victim in this case was a person, it was only thereby shown that the covenant was of a higher order than any preceding one, and well entitled to be designated both new and better.

The import of *φέρεισθαι* in ver. 16 is somewhat doubtful. The idea of "occur, take place, exist," has been very commonly attached to it here: *intercedere*, Beza; *existere*, Schulz and Boehme. But though these significations make very good sense, they are not warranted by the usage of the language. Bretschneider views the word as meaning *sermone ferri*, to be mentioned, to be announced; and Hammond and Elsner translate it, *afferri coram iudicibus*, to be carried before the judges, to be proved or established. The former of these meanings undoubtedly belongs to the word; but the latter is very questionable. All the passages adduced in defence of it associate other words with *φέρειν*, which mark out for it a juridical or forensic sense, as Acts xxv. 7, *αἰτιάματα φέρειν*. The thing wanted is a passage to prove that *φέρειν* or *φέρεισθαι*, by itself, will bear this acceptation. We seem, therefore, shut up to the signification proposed by Bretschneider; and the sense of the passage, consequently, must be: where a covenant is, there of necessity must the death of the ratifier be announced or reported as a fact. It is the death of the victim, duly certified, that confirms the covenant, and makes known its existence to all men. For a covenant is firm *ἐπὶ νεκροῖς*. *Ἐπὶ* with the dative, and referring to time, signifies *after* as well as *at*, as in the phrase *ἐπὶ ταυτοῖς*, after these things. Exactly similar to the words before us is the expression of Herodotus (iv. 164): *ἐπ' ἐξεργασμένοις*, after the things were done; and that of Lucian, *ἐπὶ τυφλῷ τῷ Δανδάμιδι*, after Dandamis was blind. *Ἐπὶ νεκροῖς*, therefore, must mean, after the victims are dead. *Ἐπεὶ μῆποτε*

means, "since never," "for never:" never has it validity while the ratifier is alive.

Proof of the fact stated in ver. 18, that the first covenant was not dedicated without blood, is next adduced by the apostle from Ex. xxiv. 3-8. It has been doubted whether *κατὰ νόμον*, in ver. 19, should be viewed as connected with *πάσης ἐντολῆς*, every commandment in the law, or with *λαληθείσης*, as meaning "spoken according to the law." The sense is much the same whichever view you take. The precepts referred to were first detailed to the people by Moses from memory. Then he wrote them down in a book, and next day he recited them anew from this book in the hearing of all the people. It may be equally said, therefore, that he uttered every precept in the book, or that every precept was delivered according to the book. The position, however, of the words, and the analogous phrase in Acts xxiv. 14, *τοῖς κατὰ τὸν νόμον γεγραμμένοις*, things written in the law, seem rather to favour the former connection. The supposition of Beza, Grotius, Schulz, Kuinöl, that *κατὰ νόμον* refers not to the book written by Moses, but to an implied oral command of God, *ex Dei jussu*, has but little to recommend it. To express this idea, not *κατὰ νόμον*, but *καθὼς ὁ Κύριος διέταξεν*, or some such phrase, might have been expected.

We find from Ex. xix. 25, that, after coming down from the mount, Moses detailed to the people the ten commandments, and a variety of other precepts (chap. xx.-xxiii.); and when he had thus made known to them all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments, they answered with one voice, and said, "All the words that the Lord hath said will we do." This was undoubtedly a covenant transaction. The Lord commands and promises, and the people hear and engage to obey. And the covenant was immediately ratified by sacrifices, which must of course be viewed as covenant-offerings. It was a very common practice in ancient times for covenants to be confirmed by sacrifice, of which the blood was sprinkled upon the contracting parties; and the probability is, that such sacrifices, as well as all others, took their rise by tradition from the original appointment of sacrifice by God as a type of the great propitiation. The commonness of sacrifice as an accompaniment of covenants both among Jews and Gentiles, appears from the peculiar ex-

pressions employed to describe such transactions: בָּרַח בְּרִית, ὁρκια
 τέμνειν, *icere fœdus*.

Considerable difficulty has been felt with the verses now before us, on account of the differences between them and what is stated in Exodus. Moses mentions nothing of goats, or water, or scarlet wool, or hyssop, or the sprinkling of the book, which are all described by Paul as forming part of the ceremonial gone through at the making of the covenant. To get over this difficulty, it has been supposed that these objects and circumstances, though not mentioned by Moses, all really had place in the service he performed, and that the fact of their employment was revealed by the Holy Ghost to Paul; but this supposition does not remove the difficulty, for the nature of the apostle's argument requires that he should refer to nothing connected with the old economy but what was familiar to his countrymen. We must suppose, therefore, that it was commonly known and believed among the Jews that the things here mentioned were actually employed by Moses, and done by him on the occasion described in Exodus, though they are not all there mentioned. That Moses has not specified everything that was done, seems plain from a passage in Jer. xxxiv. 18, where we are told that, when God entered into covenant with His people, they cut the calf in twain, and passed between the parts of it, which is not mentioned in Exodus. It has been noticed that Josephus (*Antiq.* iii. 8, 6) mentions the same particulars as Paul, and other similar ones, viz. the sprinkling of the garments of Aaron and his sons with blood and water, the sprinkling of the tabernacle and all its vessels with the blood of calves and goats and kids. These things, however, are brought into view in a somewhat different connection, having reference to the inauguration of Aaron and his sons into the office of the priesthood. Still the words of the Jewish historian certainly show that inferences had been drawn by his countrymen from the writings of Moses very similar to those before us, and that the ideas here expressed were current in Palestine at the time this epistle was written. Nor, if we examine the particulars enumerated by the apostle, shall we fail to see ground for concluding that all of them really had place at the dedication of the old covenant. Goats are specially named. Now, though Moses says nothing of goats,

he yet makes mention of burnt-offerings and peace-offerings ; and he states that the peace-offerings were oxen, *μοσχάρια*, from which certainty it is probable that the burnt-offerings were goats. Bullocks, or goats, or sheep, might equally be employed (Lev. i. ii. iii.) for burnt-offerings or for peace-offerings ; but where burnt-offerings and peace-offerings are mentioned together, it will commonly be found that one species is taken for the one, and another for the other : more species of animals are used than one. Of water, too, nothing is said by Moses ; but it is plain from Lev. xiv. 4-7, 49-52, Num. xix. 18, that when blood was sprinkled, it was common to employ water also, probably with the view of rendering the blood more liquid, and thus more easily scattered. Hyssop and scarlet wool also are not spoken of in Exodus ; but there can be no doubt that Moses used some instrument to sprinkle the blood and water, as it was a very extensive sprinkling, such as his finger could not well have effected ; and it is plain from Lev. xiv. 4-7, 51, and Ex. xii. 7, 22, that a bunch of hyssop with scarlet wool was commonly employed for this purpose. The only other circumstance requiring to be adverted to is the sprinkling of the book. With the view of preventing the apostle from saying that this was done, Moses not having said it, Erasmus, Grotius, Bengel, Knapp, Kopp, Storr, and others, disjoin *βιβλίον* from *ἐρράντισε*, and connect it with *λαβών*. Now, if nothing followed *βιβλίον* to draw it in the opposite direction, there can be no doubt that it might be viewed as connected by *τὲ* with *αἷμα*, and placed under the government of *λαβών*, as in Heb. ix. 1, xii. 2. But the *καὶ* that comes after obliges you to view *βιβλίον* and *λαὸν* as two accusatives, coupled together in the form of co-relation (*τέ—καί*), and both governed by *ἐρράντισε*. It is the materials of sprinkling that are mentioned in connection with *λαβών*, and the objects of it are without question the book and all the people. Nor is it difficult to see that the sprinkling of the book is in itself an exceedingly probable and appropriate circumstance. The book was to be viewed as in some sense the representative of God in the covenant ; it embraced the conditions He laid down ; and seeing the people as one party were sprinkled, there was an evident propriety that the book should be sprinkled too. Moreover, where did Moses lay the book when not actually

reading it? He could not hold it in his hand, for the vessel containing the blood and the instrument of sprinkling would fill both his hands. Where else would he lay the book but upon the altar, of which Moses tells us that half the blood was poured upon it? All the circumstances therefore mentioned by the apostle are highly probable in themselves as deductions from the Mosaic narrative; and doubtless they were currently believed among the Jews at the time, either as inferences from Scripture or as well-authenticated traditions. For the validity of Paul's argument did not require that he should mention all these things. His conclusion had an impregnable basis on what is actually stated by Moses, that at the dedication of the old covenant, burnt-offerings and peace-offerings were sacrificed, and that their blood was sprinkled upon the altar. This demonstrated his affirmation, that the old covenant had not been dedicated without blood. The other circumstances he must be conceived as mentioning to make a fuller and more impressive description. They were well known to the Jews, otherwise they would not have served his purpose. Doubtless there were many other traditions floating in society which had no historical basis to rest upon; but the apostle's intimate acquaintance with Scripture, and his inspiration, would completely shield him from the danger of taking up any current notion that was not founded in truth and fact. From the mixture of wheat and chaff in popular traditions, he would select only solid grain.

Vers. 20-25. The 20th verse exhibits a quotation from the passage in Exodus referred to, and the language of the Septuagint is followed in the main. The principal difference is, that for *διέθετο*, the usual word employed to describe the making of a covenant, *ἐπέτελλε* is used, which expresses more clearly the right of God to enforce the covenant. The blood sprinkled upon the people held them bound to all the stipulations of the covenant, and transgression of any of its laws now exposed them to a new curse. It has been alleged by some, that as the offering described in this passage was not a sin-offering, but a covenant sacrifice, and as Christ's offering is here compared to it, therefore it too should be viewed not as an expiatory sacrifice, but simply as an offering for the dedication of the new covenant, a sealing of His testimony with His blood, as in the case of

martyrs and confessors. But this is a very frivolous argument. There were offerings of various kinds under the Mosaic economy, but Christ's one offering corresponds to them all. There were sin-offerings; and it is most generally as a sin-offering that Christ's death is considered in the New Testament, and as such it expiates human guilt. But our Lord's death also corresponds to the covenant-offering described by Moses; and as such it dedicates the new covenant, and binds its laws upon our consciences. Just as the Jews, when they were sprinkled by Moses with the blood of the covenant-sacrifice, were held bound to obey all the precepts which had been recited in their hearing, so we, when sprinkled with the blood of Christ, are brought under obligation to comply with all the precepts and ordinances of the gospel. The same blood of Christ which as a sin-offering expiates our guilt, as a covenant-sacrifice lays us under obligations to obedience. And it is of the last importance that Christians should habitually remember, that if the blood of the new covenant has really been sprinkled upon them, and they have been accepted of God, they ought for this reason to lead lives of holy circumspection. Nothing could be more opposed to the nature of our Lord's sacrifice, than the supposition that it diminishes in any degree the duty of abounding in good works. It rather enforces all that is upright and good by new sanctions and obligations. The great moral of the sprinkling of the blood of sacrifice upon the parties to a covenant, was to indicate to them, that if they violated its stipulations, they deserved to be slain, as the victim had been whose blood was upon them. "If you sin wilfully after you have received the knowledge of the truth, then your guilt is greater than if you had never known it at all. Is Christ's blood upon you? then His laws ought to be dear to your hearts, and you ought to regulate your whole conduct in accordance with His will."

From this verse an argument has been drawn in favour of the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. The words of institution undoubtedly are grounded upon the language of Moses: *τοῦτο γάρ ἐστι τὸ αἷμά μου, τὸ τῆς καινῆς διαθήκης* (Matt. xxvi. 28). Now the blood Moses held in his hand was the actual blood of the covenant-offering; and therefore also, it is said, it must have

been Christ's own blood that was in the cup when He uttered these words. But it is a sufficient reply to this argument, that when our Lord used the language in question, His blood was not yet shed, and therefore the wine could only be viewed as an emblem or figure of it. Not the Supper, but the death on Calvary, was the covenant sacrifice. The Supper was instituted simply as a memorial of the sacrifice. "This do in remembrance of me."

Vers. 21, 22. These verses bring other points into view similar to the dedication of the old covenant, for the purpose of exhibiting the extensive use that was made of blood under the law. The tabernacle, and all the vessels employed in its services, were sprinkled with blood. The dedication of the tabernacle, which was set up a considerable time after the covenant was made, is described in Ex. xl.; and it is remarkable that nothing is there said of its being sprinkled with blood. It is only said to have been anointed with oil, and the same is affirmed of all its vessels. There is one consideration, however, which seems to show that blood also was used; for in the same chapter (vers. 12-15) we are told that Aaron and his sons were also anointed with oil before entering on the duties of their office; and yet it is clear from Ex. xxix. 20 and Lev. viii. 24, that they were sprinkled with blood as well as anointed with oil. It is a fair inference, therefore, that the tabernacle was sprinkled in the same manner. And it is a singular fact that Josephus has drawn this very conclusion from the writings of Moses; for he says : *τὴν τε σκηνὴν καὶ τὰ περὶ αὐτὴν σκεύη ἐλαίῳ τε προθυμωμένῳ, καθὼς εἶπον, καὶ τῷ αἵματι τῶν ταύρων καὶ κριῶν σφαγέντων καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν ἐνὸς κατὰ γένος* : from the preceding clause supply *ἔρραινε* (Joseph. *Antiq.* iii. 8, 6). Some, however, have supposed that it is not the first dedication of the tabernacle that is here spoken of by the apostle, but the yearly and stated services conducted in it, when the priests carried in the blood of victims, and sprinkled it (Lev. xvi. 14-20) before the mercy-seat, and upon the mercy-seat; and Moses may be said to have done this, inasmuch as he prescribed the times and laws of the whole service. But the former view, even with the difficulties that encompass it, is the preferable one.

And now follows a general statement that almost all things

are by the law purified with blood. Besides the tabernacle and its vessels, already spoken of, may be mentioned the altar, the priests, their vestments, the offerers of victims, and indeed almost everything connected with the Jewish worship and polity. The exceptions are so few as to be hardly worth mentioning; and this Tholuck conceives to be the reason why *σχεδόν* is separated from *πάντα*, the design being to throw it somewhat into the shade, and to let *πάντα* stand forth prominently in conjunction with *καθαρίζεται*. One has only to glance at the books of Moses to see the deep interest attaching to blood, and the extensive use made of it. The exceptions hinted at by the apostle were such as you find in Ex. xix. 10, Lev. xv. 5, xvi. 26, xxii. 6, where water is declared to have been the purifying element. But the general rule was, that blood should be employed; for the cleansing spoken of was not common washing, but a religious act,—a dedication to God, and a removing of ceremonial defilement. Whatever was dedicated required to be purified, and therefore *καθαρίζεται* seems here to embrace both ideas.

And to crown the whole, the apostle makes an absolute statement with respect to the remission of sin, that it could only be obtained by the outpouring of blood. *Αἵματεκχυσίας* refers not to the flowing of blood from the animal when it was struck, but to the outpouring of it upon the altar; for without this the mere slaughter of a beast was not a sacrifice at all. All sin-offerings were slain beasts. No class of transgressions was exempted from this law, although very poor individuals were allowed to present an offering of flour in certain cases (Lev. v. 11–13). But even these individuals were contemplated by the public sacrifices offered at stated periods; so that it might be affirmed without exception, that there was not one single Jew, blessed with the privilege of entering into the congregation of the Lord, for whom the blood of sacrifice was not offered. The priests, their families, and the whole congregation, stood upon a level in this respect. None who wilfully neglected the appointed offerings could enjoy the benefit of access to God. Such individuals were to be cut off from the congregation. Remission without the shedding of blood was unknown to the old law. And why was the requisition of blood so universal and imperative? Was it because slain beasts really could take away sin?

No; it was to prefigure the great sacrifice of the Messiah, without an interest in which there should be no possibility of obtaining pardon. The words before us do not indeed refer directly to the sacrifice of Christ, but still they are a *dictum probans*, though Tholuck questions this, for the impossibility of being saved otherwise than through the Redeemer's blood. For why was the rule so absolute under the law of Moses? Not certainly to teach the value of the sacrifices of beasts, but to point out the necessity of the sacrifice of Christ. As certainly as that sacrifice is the substance, whilst the old sacrifices were but the type and shadow, so certainly is it demonstrated by the maxim of our text, that the Saviour's blood is indispensable to the remission of sin. It is the type that is fashioned to suit the original, and not the original that is made to fit the type; and therefore blood was universally required of old, that it might shadow forth the universal necessity of the blood of the new covenant. You must be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, otherwise you cannot be saved. God's own Son would not have died, if remission could have been given to man in any other way. One can scarcely conceive of the incarnation of Christ taking place at all, unless it were the only possible means of deliverance that could be found. Such a remedy would only be employed in the last resort. Who, then, can escape who neglects the great salvation of the gospel? Destruction must be the doom of every soul that turns away from Christ's offered mercy. He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God (John iii. 18).

Vers. 23-28. With the offerings of slain beasts presented in such profusion of old, the apostle here contrasts the one all-perfect offering of the new covenant. The Jewish high priest, when he returned from the most holy place, had the same round of services before him in days to come; but when Christ comes back, it will be for a wholly different purpose.

By the *ὑποδείγματα* here mentioned, we must understand the tabernacle referred to in ver. 21, and all its utensils. These were made according to a pattern exhibited to Moses on the mount, and therefore they are called by the apostle (chap. viii. 5) the example and shadow of heavenly things. The tabernacle

on earth was designedly constructed so as to be a suitable pre-figuration of the tabernacle in heaven. By *τῶν ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς* accordingly, and *αὐτὰ τὰ ἐπουράνια*, we are to understand, not heavenly blessings, with Wolf, nor heaven-born spirits, with Wesley, nor the church, with Chrysostom, but the sanctuary above—the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man (chap. viii. 2); in short, that in heaven which corresponds to the most holy place among the Jews. Tholuck and Boehme give too extensive a reference or signification to *ὑποδείγματα* and *ἐπουράνια*, when they understand the former as including all that has been mentioned in the chapter connected with Judaism, —not only the tabernacle and its vessels, but the covenant, the people, and the priests; and the latter as including everything similar connected with the new dispensation. For in the following verse the Christian priest is distinguished from the *ἐπουράνια*, and described as entering, not into the holy places made with hands, but into heaven itself, which manifestly corresponds to *τὰ ἐπουράνια* in ver. 23. And though the idea of *διαθήκη*, with the necessity of sacrifice in connection with it, has occupied some portion of the apostle's thoughts (vers. 15–20), yet the tabernacle has been the leading theme of the chapter from the very beginning; and it is expressly resumed at the 21st verse, and the idea of it now controls the whole complexion of thought to the end.

What, then, is the connection of ver. 23 with what precedes? It is not so much a syllogistic conclusion drawn from premises separately made good, as a gathering up of conclusions that have been already reached; and it is not the necessity spoken of that is the main thought here, but rather the vast difference between the sacrifices declared to be necessary in the two cases. Bulls and goats, goats and calves, have been repeatedly mentioned as offerings indispensable under the old law—without their blood the priest could not enter into God's presence; and Christ has been described as mediator of a new covenant, who offered not bulls and goats, but Himself without spot to God to cleanse the conscience. It was necessary then, we see, that the patterns of heavenly things should be purified with one kind of offering, but the heavenly things themselves with another of a totally different kind. With regard to the

earthly tabernacle and its utensils, such things as the blood of goats and calves, and water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, were suitable enough to be employed as the means of purifying or dedicating them. There was a conformity and a proportion between the objects. They were both outward, visible, typical. The demonstrative *τούτοις* is put in the neuter, though the feminines *θυσίας* and *ταύρας* occur in the next clause. It means "these things," or "such things;" for *οὗτος* is sometimes made equivalent to *τοιοῦτος*, and in this sense it carried with it rather a depreciating idea, as our own word "such" often does (Tholuck, 336). Very different things were requisite for the heavenly tabernacle, which, on account of its intrinsic dignity, and the elevated region where it stands, could not admit such offerings as Moses instituted. Something infinitely superior was indispensable. By the better sacrifices mentioned, it is clear from what follows that we must understand the sacrifice of Christ. But why, then, does the apostle use the plural, when immediately after he says that Christ offered Himself, not often, but once? The reason seems to be, that it is not his object here to state the precise sacrifice that was needed for the heavenly tabernacle, but to declare generally, that not bulls and goats, as of old, would suffice, but that something greatly superior was needed; and on account of the general terms of the contrast, a plural is naturally enough employed in both members.

The purification of the earthly tabernacle by blood means the removal of ceremonial defilement from it, and the preparation of it for the service of God. But what are we to understand by the purification of the heavenly tabernacle?—for *καθαρίζεσθαι* must be supplied in the second clause from the first. Obviously the heavenly tabernacle could not need purification, like the earthly; for heaven is a holy place, and nothing corrupted or defiled has ever entered it. Either *καθαρίζεσθαι*, therefore, must be understood in the general sense of *ἐγκωμίζεσθαι*, already used (ver. 18) in the course of the argument, as Luther, Calvin, Beza, Grotius, Clericus, Bleek, and Ebrard have supposed; or the word must have a special reference to the sinfulness of the creatures who are to be prepared for admission into heaven. From what immediately follows, it is

plain that the grand effect of Christ's death was to expiate man's guilt; and this is called in chap. x. 19 the opening or dedicating of a new and living way into the holiest of all. When the heavenly things, therefore, are said to be purified by the gospel sacrifice, the meaning may just be, that heaven is made accessible to sinful man, that its purity is prevented from contracting any stain, by having the cause of such creatures favourably considered in it. Our representative, having offered a most precious sacrifice, can plead for us above without profaning the sanctity of the place; and we, trusting to His advocacy, can approach with acceptance to a throne of grace. Even of old the ceremonial defilement of the earthly tabernacle was not inherent in the tabernacle itself, but originated in the sinfulness of those who were employed about it; so that, as to both tabernacles, the purification of them ultimately resolved itself into expiation of the sins of those who approached to them. The very idea of a sinner entering into God's sanctuary carries profanation with it. If such a thing is to be, there must be an expiatory sacrifice, to prevent the threatened contamination.

Ver. 24 explains what is meant by τὰ ἐπουράνια in ver. 23, and brings into view the better sacrifice there spoken of. By χειροποίητα ἅγια, holy places made with hands, we must understand the sanctuary of Moses; which holy places are designated the figures of the true holy places, that is, of heaven, into which Christ hath entered. Ἀντίτυπα is here synonymous with ὑποδείγματα, figures, representations, patterns. Its meaning is altogether different from the signification now commonly attached to the word antitype. It rather means the same as type; and indeed τύπος and ἀντίτυπος are quite synonymous in ancient writers, being both employed to denote example, pattern, similitude (Suiceri, *Thes. Ecclesiast.* 386). As High Priest of the church, Christ entered not into the Jewish sanctuary; but He ascended to heaven, which is the true holy place, there to appear in the presence of God for us. This appearance corresponds to the appearance of the Jewish high priest within the veil on the great day of annual atonement, to deprecate God's wrath, and to secure His favour for the people. Ἐμφανίζεσθαι frequently means to appear before a judge, either as an accuser, as in Acts xxiv. 1, xxv. 2, 16, when it is followed

by *κατά*; or as a defender, as in the passage before us, when it is followed by *ὑπέρ*. The party before whom the appearance is made is put in the dative, in this case *τῷ πρωτόπρω του Θεου*, which is a Hebraism corresponding to *לפני אלוקים*. The word now employed, so long after the Saviour had ascended to heaven, marks the continuance of His appearance before God. He abides in the most holy place above, and He is constantly occupied with the spiritual concerns of His people. He performs the part of their defender or advocate. He appears before the Judge in our behalf. He pleads the merits of His own sacrificial death. And thus He secures the pardon, acceptance, and protection of all who put their trust in Him. We are not to conceive of the pardon of Christ's people as having actually taken place at the time of His death. Expiation was then effected. The ground-work of pardon was laid. But the actual forgiveness of individual men dates from the time of their believing; and the daily sins and shortcomings of Christians are blotted out when they repent of them and cry for mercy. And Christ is continually attentive to every application that is made to Him. He manages the spiritual concerns of myriads of mankind, not in the mass, but attending to them individually as His help is sought. The appearance of our Lord here mentioned is the same as His intercession spoken of in chap. vii. 25, where we are told that He is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them. Every prayer for pardon He hears. Every cry for help engages His sympathy. No sigh of a suffering soul does He disregard. Oh, what a noble and trustworthy friend we have in the skies, able at once to hear applications from the most distant regions, possessing the power to succour under all distresses, and as willing to grant relief as His resources are boundless!

Ver. 25. The entrance of Christ into the heavenly sanctuary, corresponding to the entrance of the Jewish high priest into the most holy place, might suggest to Jewish minds the idea of repeated offerings made by Him; and therefore the apostle takes care to guard against this misconception, and in so doing he exhibits proof of the superiority already claimed for the Saviour's sacrifice. Not with the dedication offerings either of

the old covenant or of the old tabernacle does he here compare it, but with the offerings of the great day of annual atonement. After οὐδὲ we must supply εἰσῆλθεν from the preceding verse: nor hath He entered into heaven, that He might offer Himself often. The Jewish high priest entered into the earthly sanctuary with great frequency, because it was always requisite that he should return from God's presence, in order to perform over again the same services at the altar. But widely different was it with Christ, whose offering, once made, never lost its value. His sacrifice had an infinite worth, and therefore it needed no repetition. It is a wrong inference from this verse, that our Lord's offering of Himself took place only in heaven. The meaning of the apostle is, not that He entered into God's presence to offer Himself once there, but that He entered altogether free from the necessity of returning to this world for the repetition of what He had perfectly accomplished while here. The Jewish priest needed to come back to the altar, but not the Christian. That προσφέρειν refers to the bringing of the victim to the altar, and not to the carrying of its blood within the veil, we have already shown; and the word παθεῖν in the following verse shows that it is what takes place at the dying of the victim the apostle has here in view. Not frequently, but once, Christ died: continually, however, He presents Himself in the presence of God; and if προσφέρειν referred to His appearance there, it might be made a question how far frequency could be denied in regard to it.

The unrivalled excellence of Christ's sacrifice, in consequence of which it needed to be offered but once, lay in the fact that it was the sacrifice of Himself, who was not merely a rational being, but the only-begotten Son of God. Contrasted with εαυτὸν in the description of the Christian priest, is ἐν αἵματι ἁλλοτρίῳ in the account of the Jewish priest. This clause, with blood of others, with blood not his own, exhibits the ground of the insufficiency of all that was done by him in his official character. His offerings were not possessed of any intrinsic value. It was but a ceremonial and a temporary effect they produced, and therefore they needed to be repeated from time to time. It was not, however, the mere fact of its being other blood than his own which the priest presented, that

rendered his services ineffectual; for though Aaron had offered himself in sacrifice, he would have been no nearer the accomplishment of a real and durable atonement. The use of ἀλλοτρίω is suggested by ἐαυτόν. In the case of Christ, the important decisive circumstance was not therefore the fact that He offered Himself, but such a self, one who was the brightness of God's glory, and the express image of His person. So, in the case of the Jewish offerings, their deficiency consisted not in this, that they were something different from the priest himself, but that they were goats and calves. They were intrinsically worthless as a means of expiating guilt. They were continually repeated, therefore; while Christ's offering took place but once.

Ver. 26. The first clause of this verse is not parenthetical, but constitutes a regular step in the argument. It exhibits a consequence that would follow from setting aside the negation made in ver. 25. What is that negation? Christ entered not into heaven in circumstances requiring Him to make frequent offerings of Himself. If He had done so; if the virtue of His one offering had lasted but a limited time; then plainly during the long ages that were past He must have suffered many times, to make good the promises given to our first parents and to Abraham. Ebrard makes the first clause of ver. 26 refer not to the whole negation made in ver. 25, but simply to ἐαυτόν: "for if He had not offered His own blood, then He must have made frequent offerings." But on this supposition the use of παθεῖν would be altogether inappropriate; for in fact He would never have suffered at all, but only the creatures He offered in sacrifice. Unless, therefore, you quite explain away παθεῖν, you must make ἐπεὶ refer to the general statement of ver. 25. If it had been necessary He should offer Himself often, then during the long ages of the past He must have endured many crucifixions. The undeniable fact, however, was that He did not appear at all till the fulness of time. The apostle, therefore, now formally states the conclusion, that when He appeared, it was once for all in the end of the world. Here there is no reasoning in a circle, as Ebrard alleges. There is first the negative statement, that Christ needed not to offer Himself often, after the fashion of the Jewish sacrifices. There is then

an inference exhibited that would follow from an opposite view altogether at variance with historical facts. And lastly, there is the positive statement in the form of a conclusion, *νῦν δέ*, now therefore, in the end of the world He hath appeared once, to make an expiation available for all time.

Why does the apostle, in his hypothetical reasoning, look backward, "For then often He must have suffered since the foundation of the world," and not forward, "Then often must He suffer before the end?" De Wette says the latter is the inference we should have naturally expected, and the one that would have been of most practical value; but the fact is, that, though quite as sound an inference as the other, it would not have answered the apostle's purpose at all. How long the world was to last, neither he nor his readers knew, and therefore he could not well speak of the frequency with which, on any supposition, offerings might be requisite in days to come; but that the world had already lasted for many ages was a fact known to all. Besides, the hypothetical inference, when drawn with regard to the past, comes at once into collision with historical facts, and thus the principle upon which it rests is overthrown. Ages upon ages had already gone by, during which Christ suffered not at all; and this was sufficient to show that His sacrifice, the only hope of man, was not a thing needing repetition. But throw the hypothetical inference wholly into the future, and then, as the history of the future is not yet written, you must find some other way of setting it aside. Moreover, even had an inference in regard to the future been equally suitable to the apostle's argument, it would not have been equally adapted to Jewish readers. For when he said hypothetically, "Then must Christ often suffer before the end," they would have at once replied, This, indeed, in the case supposed, provides for the wants of posterity; but what has become of our fathers who lived during the long ages when no offering was made by Christ? Either they must have perished, or goats and calves must have been good enough for them. In every point of view, therefore, whether you look to the exigencies of the argument or to the feelings of Jewish readers, it was indispensable the apostle should look backwards. And his inference, once applied to the past, is seen in a moment to have the very same bearing upon

the future; for if repeated offerings of Christ had been necessary between the creation and the fulness of time, they would have been equally necessary afterwards, if the world continued to exist. Set aside the inference, therefore, in regard to the past, and it immediately falls to the ground in regard to the future also; and the conclusion comes clearly and beautifully out, that only once for all was it requisite that Christ should make an offering for sin.

The principle assumed by the apostle throughout this argument, is that nothing but Christ's blood is adequate to the expiation of man's guilt. From the foundation of the world there has been no other ground on which pardon could be granted to any. The same sentiment has already been expressed in ver. 15. Our Lord's sacrifice, however, though requisite for all ages, was possessed of such intrinsic and exhaustless virtue, that it needed to be offered only once; and there were weighty reasons why it should be postponed for a number of ages from the beginning. Conceive it to have been made immediately after the fall, and it could not possibly have occupied the same prominent place which it now has in the history of the world. It would have been lost in the obscurity of remote times; and if even at present there are parties who set it aside as a myth, multitudes more would have taken the same view. All that previous preparation for the advent of the Messiah which tended to make mankind feel their need of a deliverer, and which accumulated such a mass of evidence in support of His heavenly mission, would have been wanting. It was this previous preparation which constituted the fulness of time so often referred to in Scripture. Happening in a late age of the world, after a long course of typical ceremonies had been observed, after numerous prophets had foretold the approaching deliverance, the sacrifice of Christ comes in so admirably timed, corresponding so perfectly to prior announcements, like the one half of a rock rent from the other, that it stands upon an impregnable basis of evidence. The wanderings of the nations, too, whilst left to themselves, their vain religious rites, their futile plans of propitiation, all furnish irrefragable proof of the need of such a guide and such a sacrifice as the Lord Jesus Christ supplies. The postponement of the Saviour's offering, seeing it was only to be made once, undoubtedly was

calculated to invest it with a more commanding influence over the whole race of man from the beginning to the end of time. And doubtless it happened at the precise period that was fitted to make it most influential.

How the expiation of Christ was brought to bear upon believers under the old dispensation, we can but obscurely imagine. Cocceius says that sin was not pardoned in those days, but only overlooked (Ernesti, ii. 798); and De Wette thinks that, as Christ's propitiation can only be appropriated by faith, and the ancients knew nothing of His death, it could not be of any avail to them. But these views run directly counter to the apostle's teaching both here and in ver. 15. There must have been, in those who properly observed the ancient sacrifices, a faith that looked beyond the type, and fixed itself upon the great Deliverer. All true believers must have, like Abraham, seen the day of Christ afar off, and been made glad by the sight. They might have but obscure conceptions of it; their faith would be considerably different in character from ours; but still, all the blessings they enjoyed flowed to them from the one source of spiritual good to man. The apostle would have the Jews remember, that in urging them to come to Christ, he is guiding them to the very Deliverer in whom their fathers trusted. Christianity is not radically different from Judaism, but is rather the consummation of it—the blooming flower which the stem of the old law was reared for the very purpose of bearing.

There is something peculiar about the phrase *ἐπεὶ ἔδει*. Winer (328) says *ἂν* was to be expected along with it. But the signification requisite in the passage would run counter to the principles which he himself and all writers on Greek syntax lay down (Winer, 351; Kühner, ii. 89). With the imperfect, *ἂν* throws the thing conditioned into the present time: *ἂν ἔδει*, it would be necessary. "Were God your Father, *ἡγαπᾶτε ἂν ἐμέ*, ye would love me" (John viii. 42). In order to throw the conditional statement into past time, you must take an aorist or a pluperfect: *ἂν ἔδεησε*, it would have been necessary; *ἂν μετενόησαν*, they would have repented long ago (Matt. xi. 21). Why, then, does not the apostle write *ἂν ἔδεησε*? The reason, perhaps, will be found in the presupposition upon which the conditional statement is grounded.

After *ἐπεὶ* you must supply the condition : because, if Christ had entered into heaven in the circumstances supposed, then *ἂν ἐδέχθη*, it would have been necessary for Him to come back and suffer again and again. This conditional statement would naturally apply just to all the time between the ascension and the writing of the epistle. But the apostle wanted to say far more, and therefore he throws aside the conditional form, and uses an absolute imperfect ; in the case supposed, *ἔδει*, it was requisite that from the very foundation of the world He should suffer. This form is both stronger than the ordinary conditional would be, and it is more suitable to the peculiar shade of thought.

Two views have been taken of *συντελεία τῶν αἰώνων*. Hammond, Calvin, Macknight, Tholuck, Stuart, understand it to mean the end of ages, or of the Jewish economy. Olearius, Grotius, Wolf, Ernesti, Böhme, De Wette, Vatablus, view it as denoting the end of the world. In defence of this latter view it may be argued, that wherever *αἰῶνες* in the plural occurs in the Epistle to the Hebrews, it means the world, as in chap. i. 2, xi. 3. And in the Gospels *συντέλεια* repeatedly occurs in connection with *αἰῶνος* or *αἰώνων*, and always means the end of the world, as in Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49, xxviii. 20, xxiv. 3. The contrast, too, between *καταβολῆς κόσμου* and *συντελεία τῶν αἰώνων* requires this meaning in the passage before us. Are we then to suppose the apostle was under a mistake, and imagined the end of the world was quite close at hand ? “Near” and “remote” are indefinite expressions, whose force depends upon the kind of measure you have in your mind. Now the apostle is speaking of the space from the foundation of the world, and therefore he might refer to his own day as near the end, though he knew it to be some hundreds of years away. An event may be said to happen in the end of the year if it occur during the last three or four months, or in the end of the century if it occur during the last twenty or thirty years. The prophecies of the Old Testament all look forward to the times of the Messiah as the last times. No other dispensation was to follow. The apostles, therefore, speak of their own times as the last times, as in 1 Cor. x. 11, 1 John ii. 18. Yet we are not to suppose they imagined the end might come even while they were alive ; for

when the Thessalonians drew this conclusion from something Paul had said, he wrote them another epistle, correcting their mistake, and showing that a variety of things must occur before the day of judgment arrived.

Macknight understands *εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας* as meaning, for the abolition of sin-offerings. Doubtless Christ made an end of these. But the words under notice signify, for the abolition of sin itself,—the putting away, the blotting out, the expiation of it. The phrase is substantially of the same import as *εἰς ἀπολύτρωσιν παραβάσεων* in ver. 15. This removal of sin was effected *διὰ τῆς θυσίας ἑαυτοῦ*. Do these words mean, “by His sacrifice,” as De Wette affirms, or “by the sacrifice of Himself,” as the majority of interpreters suppose? There can be no doubt, that when the genitive of a person is put after *θυσία*, it almost always denotes the party by whom the sacrifice is made, as when you speak of the sacrifices of the children of Israel or of the Jewish priests; but it can as little be doubted that the victim may be designated by a genitive under the government of *θυσία*. Of this you have an example in this very epistle (xiii. 15): *θυσίαν αἰνέσεως*, where *αἰνέσεως* designates the matter of the sacrifice (see also Lev. ii. 14). Now, in the passage before us, the contrast between *ἐν αἵματι ἁλλοτρίῳ* and *διὰ τῆς θυσίας αὐτοῦ* seems plainly to require, that in the latter phrase *αὐτοῦ* should be viewed as indicating the matter of the sacrifice. The same view is confirmed by the parallel passage in Heb. vii. 27, where the phrase *ἑαυτὸν ἀνενέγκας* is employed (see also Heb. ix. 12, 14, 15, x. 10). It was not the mere fact of Christ’s having made an offering, but the fact of His having offered Himself, which rendered it altogether unnecessary that He should sacrifice more than once. Our High Priest is the most illustrious Being in the universe, God’s own Son; and the sacrifice which He offered being Himself, is possessed of a virtue which we can no more measure than we can sound the depths of the divine nature. Its value is boundless and inexhaustible.

Πεφανερωται does not refer, as Capellus, Grotius, Carpzov, Schulz, suppose, like *ἐμφανισθῆναι*, in ver. 24, to Christ’s appearance before God in heaven, but to His appearance in this world when He became incarnate. Only once was He thus

manifested upon earth (1 Pet. i. 20; 1 John iii. 5, 8); but continually does He appear before God. You may say that only once He entered into heaven; but you can hardly say that only once He appeared there. With the first coming of Christ, as here described, His second advent is placed in contrast in ver. 28, *ἐκ δευτέρου ὀφθήσεται*; and both appearances must plainly be understood as having this world for their scene. Put the first in heaven, *πεφανέρωται*, and it will be difficult to determine where the last, *ὀφθήσεται*, is to take place.

The doctrine which the apostle lays down with so much distinctness and emphasis in vers. 25, 26, that Christ's offering only needed to take place once, in order to expiate human guilt from the very foundation of the world, stands in irreconcilable opposition to the Romish dogma of the mass. Passing over the unparalleled absurdities involved in transubstantiation, is it not plain from our text, that the repetition of a sacrifice implies its imperfection? Christ's body, says the apostle, only required to be offered one single time. No, says the Romanist, it is offered on every occasion when mass is celebrated. Could anything more contradictory to Scripture be imagined, or anything more derogatory to our Lord's all-perfect sacrifice? The Romish idea, too, of an unbloody sacrifice of Christ, is plainly repugnant to the language of the apostle; for he says, that if He had needed to offer Himself often, then He must also have suffered often. Sacrifice of Christ and suffering of Christ are plainly inseparable. If the mass, then, be a real sacrifice, our Lord suffers every time it is celebrated. He dies, His blood is shed; and it is the priest who puts Him to death. Yes; the priest does profanely crucify the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame (Heb. vi. 6).

Vers. 27, 28. As vers. 25, 26 show that Christ offered Himself but once for the expiation of human guilt, so vers. 27, 28 present the idea, that, consistently with His position and nature as a man, He could not make a sacrifice of Himself more frequently. His death was needed but once; and it was also in harmony with the law of mortality in this world that He should die but once. There would have been something unnatural in His dying and rising, and dying and rising again and again without end; and if expiation could only thus have been made,

we can hardly imagine the plan would have been adopted at all. *Καθ' ὅσον* does not merely indicate likeness, like *καθώς*, but it points to the ground and measure of the likeness: inasmuch as men die but once, therefore also Christ, as being a man, could surrender His life but once. The apostle does not merely mean to say, men die but once, and Christ offered Himself but once, and so there is a resemblance; but he describes the resemblance as having a ground in the laws of human nature.

Ἀπόκειται denotes being in reserve for one; and it is used both with regard to good things, as in Col. i. 5, 2 Tim. iv. 8; and with regard to evil things, as in the passage before us. Longinus (ix. 60) employs the word in the same manner as the apostle does here: *ἡμῖν ἀπόκειται ὁ θάνατος*. Death is in store for us. It is a destiny which we cannot shun. This is God's appointment, and it is the consequence of sin. There breathes not a man who can cherish the hope of escaping, for all are sinners. The vigorous as well as the feeble—the young as well as the old—the prosperous as well as the unfortunate,—must all bow beneath the stroke of death. And how important a consideration is it, that death in this world comes but once to each individual! Were you to die and to come alive again and again, passing through life repeatedly, then your neglect of preparation for the first encounter with death might be remedied afterwards; but when it is only once you can take the step from time into eternity, how irretrievable must be the ruin of dying in sin! What can only happen once, should excite the deepest thoughtfulness about the consequences that are to follow. Yet multitudes live as if either they were never to die at all, or as if they were to have repeated opportunities of preparing for their final state.

As there is but one dying appointed for us in this world, so the apostle mentions that this death is followed by judgment. It has been made a question, whether it be a trial of each individual after his own death that is meant here, or the general judgment of all at the last day. Our Lord's words to the thief suffering beside Him (Luke xxiii. 43)—Paul's desire to depart and to be with Christ (Phil. i. 23)—the parable of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke xvi. 22),—seem all to make it plain, that man's state is fixed at death; and that whether there be a formal

trial or not, the soul not only becomes conscious of its doom, but actually passes either into a state of blessedness or of suffering. Still the judgment here mentioned rather appears to be, not the process through which each soul passes when sent to its own place at death, but the judgment of the great day ; because, in the comparison made by the apostle between men and Christ, it corresponds to Christ's reappearance at the final consummation of all things. One thing, however, is plain from the 27th verse, that after death there is no room for further probation. When you leave this world, your state for eternity is fixed. There is no purgatory, where the evils of negligence here can be remedied. In the spiritual world you can have no opportunity of seeking that Saviour whom you have disregarded upon earth. Between death and judgment nothing intervenes of a disciplinary character. You must prepare at once—make preparation for the two events ; and the same preparation suffices for both. Schulz understands *κρίσις* as referring only to the judgment of the wicked, and supposes a contrast between it and *σωτηρίαν* in the next verse—the happy destiny of the righteous. But as the apostle is speaking of men in general as appointed to death, it is obvious that *κρίσις* must have the same amplitude of reference ; and the relation of *κρίσις* to *σωτηρίαν* is not that of contrast, but of genus to species. The apostle closes with bringing prominently into view the blessed result of the judgment of one class, whom he particularly describes. Annihilation has been concluded from this passage to be the result of the judgment of the wicked, because nothing at all is said regarding it ; but you might as well infer from 1 Thess. iv. 13–18, where the resurrection of the righteous alone is spoken of, that the wicked were not even to be raised from the grave, although our Lord most expressly states the very reverse (John v. 28).

Ver. 28 brings the other member of the comparison into view, and makes statements regarding Christ that correspond to the one dying, and the final judgment of men already mentioned : *οὕτω καί*, so also. This reading, whether you look to its external evidence or to its internal suitableness, is decidedly superior to *οὕτως*, which would merely indicate the fact of resemblance ; but *καί* looks back to the ground of the similitude contained in *ὅσον* : inasmuch as men die but once, so also Christ,

as being a man, could devote Himself but once. Christ's dying is described as a sacrifice : ἀπαξ προσερχθείς. Mr. Stuart proposes to give these words a reflexive sense, on the ground that the first aor. pass. frequently has a middle signification, particularly when the verb wants the first aor. mid. This is true. But in the case of the verb before us, the distinction between the different voices is very carefully observed in the New Testament. And, in fact, a passive rendering is most suitable in this passage ; for the object of the apostle here is not so much to describe Christ's activity in respect of His offering, which has been amply done already, as to point out the fact, that dying once, offered once in sacrifice, He was thus brought under the operation of the same law that bears sway over all mankind.

The purpose of Christ's offering is thus described : εἰς τὸ πολλῶν ἀνευρεκεῖν ἁμαρτίας. Two usages of ἀναφέρω as applied to sacrifice prevail. It sometimes has the victim placed after it in the accusative, as in Heb. vii. 27, xiii. 15, where it signifies, like προσφέρω, to offer. But sometimes also it describes, not what is done with the victim, but the relation of the victim to the sins needing expiation, as in 1 Pet. ii. 24, Isa. liii. 11, 12, and the verse before us. Now here Luther, Schlichting, Grotius, Limborch, and Bleek view the word as synonymous with ἀφαιρεῖν in chap. x. 4, to take away, to lift up, to remove. But the language of Isaiah, to which the words of Peter and those also before us plainly refer, furnishes the true explanation. For the prophet says, לָבַשׁ יְהוָה אֶת־עֲוֹנוֹתַי, and נָשָׂא יְהוָה אֶת־עֲוֹנוֹתַי, rendered in the Septuagint, καὶ τὰς ἁμαρτίας αὐτῶν αὐτὸς ἀνολοσεῖ, and καὶ αὐτὸς ἁμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκεν. Now לָבַשׁ signifies to bear as a load, a burden ; and נָשָׂא signifies, in connection with sin, to bear one's guilt, to endure the punishment of it. Without a doubt, therefore, the words under review signify that Christ bore sin, bore its guilt, bore its punishment. Our fathers have sinned, says Jeremiah (Lam. v. 7), and we have borne their iniquities—נָשָׂא. He bare our sins, says Peter (1 Pet. ii. 24), in His own body on the tree—ἀνήνεγκεν. The preposition ἀνά, forming part of this verb, does not refer to Christ's elevation upon the cross, as Capellus, Calovius, and Wolf suppose, as if the meaning were, He carried up our sins to the cross. The simple meaning is, He bore our sins as a

burden. They were laid upon him. His death was vicarious. It was endured in the room of the guilty.

Capellus supposes *πολλῶν* to be here used in opposition to *all*, and to be therefore exclusive of some. But Calvin takes quite a different view. He understands the word as denoting multitude, in opposition to one. Christ was one person, and died but once; and yet His death benefits not one, but myriads: "Multos dicit pro omnibus. Certum quidem est non omnes ex Christi morte fructum percipere; sed hoc ideo fit, quia eos impedit sua incredulitas." There seems to be the same relation between *πολλῶν* and *ἀπεκδεχόμενοις* here, as between *κόσμον* and *πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων* in John iii. 16.

As to the one dying of men corresponds the one offering of Christ, so to the judgment of men corresponds the second coming of Christ. He shall appear a second time, and He shall come *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας*. These are the words upon which Edward Irving mainly grounded his doctrine of the peccability of Christ's human nature. Because the Saviour is said to come the second time without sin, he inferred that He had not been altogether without sin when first in this world. But this inference directly contradicts chap. iv. 15, where Christ's personal character while upon earth is spoken of, and where He is declared to have been *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας*. In the verse before us, therefore, these words cannot bear the same sense as in the former passage. They manifestly form a contrast, not to Christ's character during His first visit to this world, but to His work in reference to sin; and they intimate that what He did then in regard to sin, He will not repeat when He comes back. He bare the sins of many formerly, but He shall appear the second time without sin thus laid as a burden upon Him. That something like this must be the import of the phrase, the contrast between the different members of the sentence makes clear, though it is difficult to translate the words without seeming to put something in them more than they are fitted to express. Capellus, Michaelis, Storr, and Schœttgen understand *ἁμαρτίας* in the sense of sin-offering; but it is only *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* that bears this signification, there being an ellipse of *θυσία*. In 2 Cor. v. 21, the contrast between *ἁμαρτία* and *δικαιοσύνη* shows that *ἁμαρτία* does not there mean sin-offering, but is put

the abstract for the concrete. The idea of Theodoret, that *χωρὶς ἁμαρτίας* refers to the condition of the world at Christ's second advent, *οὐκέτι τῆς ἁμαρτίας κρατούσης*, will not stand the test ; and as little is the proposal of Grotius to be listened to, who would connect these words with *τοῖς αὐτὸν ἀπεκδεχομένοις*.

Εἰς σωτηρίαν must be connected with *ὀφθήσεται* : He shall appear for salvation. This word, often employed to denote the blessings believers receive from Christ in this world,—pardon, acceptance, peace of conscience,—here signifies the completion of their deliverance at the last day. Their bodies are then to be redeemed from the power of the grave, and glorified ; and in their completed and perfect nature they are to enter upon the enjoyment of endless felicity. *Τοῖς αὐτὸν ἀπεκδεχομένοις* is a description of believers. These words are not to be understood as referring only to those who may be alive and waiting for Christ when He comes : for all Christians from the beginning have been admonished to prepare for the coming of their Lord ; and none who in any age have complied with this admonition shall be put to shame. They shall see Christ, and enter with joy into His presence. When it is said, to them that look for Him shall He appear, it is not meant that He shall not appear to others. Every eye shall see Him. But whilst to the righteous He brings salvation, to the wicked He shall appear as the avenger of Heaven's insulted majesty (2 Thess. i. 8).

CHAPTER X.

VERSES 1-19 prosecute the subject of the preceding chapter, in which a comparison was instituted between the sanctuary and services of the old economy and the work of Christ. And an important additional step is now taken in the argument. Hitherto it has been shown that the sacrifices of bulls and goats were figures of our Lord's sacrifice; and at chap. ix. 13, 14, it was affirmed that they sanctified to the purifying of the flesh, while His cleansed the conscience. Having thus cautiously prepared the way—for Jewish prejudices were easily alarmed—the apostle now proceeds positively to show that the Levitical sacrifices were incapable of blotting out sin. This was implied in what he had said, but it is now first plainly stated; and it is exhibited as an inference from the fact already insisted upon, that the old economy was a figure, and that its sacrifices were continually repeated (vers. 1-4). For confirmation of this inference, so opposed to Jewish feelings, passages are adduced from the Old Testament; and the apostle, commenting upon these passages, not only repeats what he had said about inutility of sacrifices (ver. 11), but also introduces the idea that it was God's undoubted purpose to abolish them (ver. 9). And he closes the section with again referring to the passage in Jer. xxxi. 31-34, already quoted and commented upon at chap. viii. 7-13. As employed there, that passage is made the ground of an inference that the Mosaic covenant has become old: as employed here, it is made the ground of an inference that sacrifice in particular is to be altogether abolished (ver. 18).

Ver. 1. The law here mentioned denotes the Mosaic institutions, the first covenant spoken of at chap. ix. 1. This law

has a shadow of good things. Already has this been shown at chap. viii. 5 and ix. 9-13; but it is here repeated, in order to be made the groundwork of the conclusions indicated above. The force of *σκιάν* the apostle illustrates by means of a contrast : *σκιάν, οὐκ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα*. The Peschito, Luther, Schmid, S. Capellus, Grotius, Calovius, Wolf, Böhme, and Ebrard, view this contrast as being the same with the contrast exhibited in Col. ii. 17, where the law is called *σκιὰ*, and the gospel *σῶμα*. This would make sound sense; but the objection to it is, that *εἰκὼν* means image, and not body or substance. When *σκιὰ* and *εἰκὼν* are opposed to one another, *σκιὰ* means a faint outline, a rough sketch, such as a painter makes at the outset; and *εἰκὼν* a complete and perfect likeness, such as the canvas exhibits when the painting is finished. In accordance with this distinction, Œcumenius, Gregory of Nazianzum, Cajetan, Calvin, Chrysostom, and Theodoret view the passage as teaching that the law exhibits but a faint shadow of heavenly blessings, while the gospel sets before us a full and clear revelation of them. This, however, undermines the foundation of the apostle's argument; for his purpose would not be served by considering the relations of the law and of the gospel to the future world, but their relation to one another. Now, in so far as the law may be viewed as a shadow, the gospel must be considered as the body or substance; for the thing to be proved is not the perfection of heaven, but the perfection of Christ's sacrifice upon earth. How, then, are *σκιάν* and *εἰκόνα* here related to one another? It is quite a mistake, though one almost universally fallen into, to suppose that if *σκιάν* here refers to the law, *εἰκόνα* must of necessity refer to the gospel. No such thing. What corresponds to the gospel in these clauses is *μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν* and *πραγμάτων*. And the apostle, looking to these blessings, which the law had foretold were coming, says that he could not describe it as having exhibited a perfect picture of them, but only a faint outline or shadow. Even if the law had contained a perfect representation of gospel blessings, it could not have supplied the place of the gospel itself. How poor a substitute for a man is the best painting that ever came from an artist's hand! How much less, then, can the law pretend to do for sinners what they need, when it does not con-

tain even an accurate picture of spiritual blessings, but only a faint outline and rough sketch of them! And this view of the law leads directly to the conclusion that it can never make sinners perfect, as the gospel is fitted to do. It is obvious, however, that this conclusion would not follow, if you supposed the apostle's premiss to be, that the gospel was only a much better likeness of heavenly things than the law was. Both, in this case, would be inadequate to meet man's necessities. No, the gospel embodies the very substance of spiritual blessings; and it is the law only that exhibits an image of them, and that by no means a complete one. The negative clause, *οὐκ αὐτὴν τὴν εἰκόνα*, is plainly suggested to the apostle's mind by the glorious views he has been giving of Christ in the preceding chapter. With his eyes fixed on the Saviour's transcendent dignity, and an expiation that extended its influence back to the commencement of time, and onwards to the end of the world, he feels that the law, if it is to be called a picture of these things, only deserves to be styled a rude draught of them.

Those who view *εἰκόνα* as here denoting the gospel, while *σκιὰν* means the law, are under the necessity of making *μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν* refer only to heavenly blessings, which narrows the import of the phrase too much. We have seen that in chap. ix. 11 it means in general the good things bestowed by Christ as High Priest of the church—blessings on earth and blessings in heaven, grace in time and glory in eternity. And here it is more obvious still that this must be the meaning of the words, for they stand as a counterpart to the law, and denote that of which the law was a shadow. Now the law pointed directly and immediately, not to heaven, but to the fulness of time, and to the blessings that were to come with the Messiah—redemption, pardon, outpouring of the Spirit, and consequent preparation for eternal life. That the good things to come here mentioned include spiritual blessings as enjoyed in this world, is obvious from the clause which the apostle throws in before stating his conclusion, *κατ' ἐναιυτόν, κ.τ.λ.* These words point out the principal respect in which the law was a shadow, viz. by means of its bulls and goats offered in sacrifice for the purifying of the flesh. Now what was the substance corresponding to these? Manifestly the expiatory sacrifice of Christ, which

purges the conscience from guilt, and confers a title to eternal life. To limit *μελλόντων ἀγαθῶν* to the glories of heaven, pushes out of view the relation of the law to the gospel, and makes the gospel itself only a picture like the law, though more fully and better painted.

The sacrifices here brought into view as illustrations of the shadowy character of the law, are those of the great day of annual atonement, the most important of all Jewish offerings. Yet what were they? They were but a figure, a faint representation of the true sacrifice which the Messiah was to offer. They were therefore worthless in themselves. They were like the shadow of food to a hungry man. They were like the painting of a life-boat to mariners sinking in the sea. They spoke of pardon, but they could not bestow it. They indicated the need of it, but they could not supply the want. And the apostle, with the view of making this plain, draws attention to the exceeding frequency of legal offerings, so different from the one sacrifice of Christ described in the preceding chapter, which was so perfect as not to need repetition. It is well remarked by Tholuck, that the very structure of this clause is fitted to suggest the idea of a laborious and wearisome round. The words move in measured numbers, there is an intentional redundancy of expression: yearly, the same sacrifices, in continuance, over and over and over again.

Instead of *δύναται*, weighty authorities—A, C, 10, 17, 36, Syr., Chrys., Theod., Theophyl.—read *δύνανται*, which Lachmann and Tischendorf adopt, though Griesbach prefers the common reading. With respect to the external authority for *δύναται*, it will bear comparison with the evidence on the other side, and the internal evidence is altogether in its favour. With *δύνανται* as the reading, the first clause is thrown loose from the construction; and you must take as the nominative the supplied nominative of *προσφέρουσιν*, naturally enough wanting therein a subordinate member, they, or men, or priests, but one that ought to have been expressed in the case of the leading verb. Besides, the nominative to *προσφέρουσιν* does not so well suit *δύνανται*, for it is the insufficiency of the law or of the sacrifices of which the apostle is speaking; and in ver. 11, accordingly, this verb occurs in the same connection with *θυσίαι* as its

nominative. With *δύναται* as the reading, on the other hand, you have a clear and full and well-constructed sense, the nominative being *ὁ νόμος*. *Προσερχομένους* means those who approach to God by means of the sacrifices of the law. It is equivalent to *λατρεύοντας* in the next verse. *Τελειῶσαι* means making perfect, putting the worshipper in a right position with respect to God, purging the conscience from the guilt of sin : see chap. ix. 9. This the law could not do. The worshipper might be most assiduous in approaching to the altar, he might observe all the appointed rites ; but these were incompetent to procure for him pardon. *Οὐδέποτε*, not at all : never could they accomplish this. The apostle uses the present tense—*δύναται* ; because, though the law was virtually abolished, yet it continued to be observed in Jerusalem when he wrote, and his object was to withdraw the Jews from dependence upon it.

Ver. 2. This verse contains a development of the argument embodied in the middle clause of the first verse. For the insertion of *οὐκ* after *ἐπεὶ* there is a decided preponderance of authority ; and therefore this reading has been adopted by Erasmus, Bengel, Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf. Yet both readings give the same sense ; for in the one case you must view the clause as a statement, and in the other you must make it a question. The latter, however, is much more forcible and striking, and *ἐπεὶ* is frequently so used in questions (Rom. iii. 6). Here, as in chap. ix. 26, there is something to be supplied : since, because if the case were otherwise, if the sacrifices of the law really could have made the worshippers perfect, would they not have ceased being offered ? Unquestionably they would. Their object once served, they would have been laid aside. Who continues to sow in his field when the seed has taken root and is growing ? Who subjects himself to medical treatment when his health has been completely restored ? If the worshippers really had been purged from the guilt of sin by the sacrifices of the law, they would no more have experienced the pangs of remorse, nor have felt the need of any further oblation. Let a perfect atonement once be made, and there is no more need of its repetition than there is of another sun to shine in the sky. Some few interpreters both retain the negative, and translate the verse as a statement, as if the mean-

ing were, that Jewish offerings, on the supposition of their being effective atonements, would have continued to be offered to the end of the world. But this idea is opposed to the whole train of thought in the preceding chapter, where repetition is viewed as the infallible mark of imperfection; and it would make the different parts of the verse before us contradict one another.

There is no need of *εἶναι* being supplied to *προσφερόμεναι*, as many interpreters suppose. The participle is often used in Greek where we employ the infinitive; and it expresses the peculiar shade of thought, that the thing indicated by the participle, though connected with the action of the finite verb, existed independently of it. And this may furnish an explanation of the fact, that there is no verb more frequently followed by a participle than *παύεσθαι*. Everything that ceases must have previously existed. The words before us may be well enough rendered, Would they not have ceased being offered, ceased as offerings? (Winer, 397.) *Κεκαθαρισμένους*—or, according to the reading contained in D, E, and adopted by Tischendorf, *κεκαθαρισμένους*—is here employed to express the idea already exhibited in *τελειῶσαι*. It being the effect of sacrifice that is described, it is plain that this word does not refer to sanctification, but to justification, and means being cleansed from the guilt of sin. One efficient sacrifice alone is needed for this purpose; and the apostle's words imply, that individuals who have once obtained the benefit of such a sacrifice are placed in a position of security. Their sins are for ever pardoned. Once for all they are purged from guilt; and if they have a right view of their state, they can no more be agonized with the consciousness of sin. The apostle does not mean to say that persons really pardoned will lose the consciousness of having been guilty, or will be perfectly free from sins and shortcomings in days to come, but only that they will not again fall back into the position of unpardoned sinners, to be burdened with a load of guilt which they cannot throw off. There is no true purgation of conscience but that which is abiding in its effects, and prepares the individual for serving the living God in spirit and in truth (chap. ix. 14).

Ver. 3. This verse points out how much the Mosaic sacrifices differed from such a perfect sacrifice as he had supposed

in the preceding verse. Not only did they not do for the worshippers what is there described, ἀλλά, but, on the contrary, by their continued repetition they rather excited and perpetuated the consciousness of sin. They reminded the worshippers of their guilt as still existing, and needing expiation. True, even under the gospel we are reminded of our sins. But the cases are widely different. The sacrifices of the law brought sins to remembrance as not yet sufficiently atoned for,—every new sacrifice making the worshippers feel that former sacrifices had not fully answered their end. Any efficacy they had, had all been expended within a limited space, and the burden of guilt still remained upon the conscience. There had not been received a full, free, and irrevocable pardon. How different is it with the remembrance of sins which believers have under the gospel! Their gratitude for the marvellous mercy they have received is stirred up by it; and they know that the expiation to which they are trusting can never lose its power. The apostle is not to be understood as meaning that the sins of the current year only were brought to mind by the Levitical offerings, as if all former sins had been quite cancelled. Sacrifices of slain beasts only sanctified to the purifying of the flesh (chap. ix. 13), removing social and ecclesiastical disabilities; but they never at any time made real expiation of inward guilt. They were therefore fitted, as often as they were offered, to remind the worshippers of all their sins, to renew the sad thought of their accumulated offences. The yearly slaying of bulls and goats exhibited to their view the penal death which as sinners they merited; and in so far as any of them really were pardoned, it was on the ground of what the Messiah was to do, whom true believers were enabled with more or less distinctness to recognise as foreshadowed by the services of the law. Philo (*de vita Mosis*, lib. iii. p. 669) uses a phrase exactly similar to the apostle's language, though applied by him only to impenitent and unreformed transgressors: *θυσίαι καὶ εὐχαὶ οὐ λύσω ἀμαρτημάτων ἀλλ' ὑπόμνησιν ἐργάζονται*. M'Lean's idea, that it is God's remembrance the apostle is referring to, is inconsistent with the contrast plainly made between *μηδεμίαν συνεδῆσιν ἀμαρτιῶν* and *ἀνάμνησιν ἀμαρτιῶν*. The meaning is, in them, or by them, *θυσίαις* understood: there is a yearly

remembrance on the part of the sinner of his sins. His conscience is not freed by them from the burden of guilt.

Ver. 4. What is shown in the preceding verses regarding the inadequacy of the Levitical offerings, from their continual repetition, is confirmed in this verse by an argument grounded upon the nature of things. Expiation by the blood of slain beasts is impossible. This position is laid down by the apostle as one that appeals to our common sense, and that carries its evidence to a considerate mind in the very terms of it. A brute beast taken by force, pierced with the sacrificial knife, dying as its blood flows out, itself all the while unconscious of what is going on! How, in the nature of things, can such a service expiate the guilt of rational and responsible beings? The means and the end are utterly disproportioned to one another. There is no correspondence between them. Just as rationally might you employ the animal to perform the various duties incumbent upon you in life. No; the blood of slain beasts never can expiate guilt, never did, never will. The thing is impossible. It was mere ceremonial purification the ancient sacrifices effected; but they did nothing to remove the guilt or to cut off the eternal consequences of sin. These ends, common sense must allow, could only be attained, if attained at all, by such a sacrifice as the apostle had described at ix. 14—the sacrifice of the incarnate Son of God, who, having power over His own life, offered Himself with the full consent of His own will, and brought means into operation for the moral renovation of mankind, that with pure consciences they might serve the living God.

Ἀφαιρεῖν ἁμαρτίας has the same meaning as *περιλεῖν ἁμαρτίας* in x. 11, and *εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας* in ix. 26. It denotes to put away sins, to expiate their guilt, to render satisfaction to justice for them, so as to secure the pardon and acceptance of the sinner.

Ver. 5. What is affirmed in ver. 4 is the boldest statement the apostle has yet ventured to make. He has indeed said in chap. ix. 13 what implied as much, viz. that sacrifices of slain beasts sanctified to the purifying of the flesh; but here he positively declares that they had no power at all to purge the conscience. The thing was impossible. He has advanced with great caution, so as not unnecessarily to excite prejudice; but

he now feels he has said something that would give extreme offence to Jewish minds, and therefore he considers it necessary to fortify his position by appealing to the authority of the Old Testament. He first adduces a passage from Ps. xl. 6—8, where sacrifices, and offerings, and burnt-offerings are spoken of as not in themselves acceptable to God, or fitted to propitiate His favour, and where another method is indicated as that by which this great object was to be accomplished.

The fact that the apostle cites this psalm, and puts the words of it in the mouth of the Messiah, shows it was designed as a prediction of Christ. It is quite inconsistent with the inspiration of the New Testament, to suppose that the psalm originally referred only to David, and that the apostle, finding some portions of it suitable to his purpose, made a use of them which had never been contemplated before. In this case his argument would have no force. He would only be trifling with his readers. Our Lord's own statement, that in the Psalms, as well as in the law of Moses and in the prophets, there were things written concerning Him (Luke xxiv. 44), warrants us to look for Messianic psalms, and not for one or two merely, but for a considerable number. Now, if there are Messianic psalms, who can mark them out to us so well as the apostles? Surely their application of a psalm to Christ is the best of all evidence that it is a Messianic psalm. Hengstenberg, however, maintains (*Comm. über die Psal.* ii. 323) that the fortieth Psalm refers only to David, and denies that the quotation of it in Hebrews warrants any other conclusion. His argument is to the following effect: that a double element was embraced in the sin-offerings of the law, viz. what man did in offering them, and what God granted in receiving them. In both these respects they were figurative merely. The obligation of man was only pictured by them, but not fulfilled; and so equally reconciliation was only represented by them, but not bestowed. The psalm therefore, concludes Hengstenberg, though wholly Davidic, furnishes a clear proof of the principle laid down by the apostle in Heb. x. 4; and he could not have found in the Old Testament another passage more suitable to his purpose. But this reasoning, even were it without a single flaw, is quite aside from the question. The argument for the Messianic application of the

psalm is, not that it is fitted to prove the inefficiency of animal sacrifices, but that it is represented by the apostle as uttered in the person of Christ. It is not the use of the psalm suggested by Hengstenberg that in reality is made, but a very different one; and it admits of no doubt, that, according to the apostle's view, the argument is far more direct, and complete, and conclusive. The argument, as it is represented by Hengstenberg, is not conclusive to the extent to which it is carried in our text. It is only conclusive negatively against the efficiency of animal sacrifices; but it is not conclusive positively for the sacrifice of Christ, as the thing to be substituted in their room, according to the apostle's view. You have the taking away of the first (see ver. 9), but you have no establishment of the second. Nay, not only does Hengstenberg's view of the psalm not carry you all the length to which the apostle goes, but it leads you into positive error at the point where you stop short. For if the psalm is descriptive of David only, and not at all of Christ, then, as it is David's doing of the will of God that is represented as coming in the room of burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin, and as no one will pretend that David ever made an actual expiation, you are shut up to the conclusion that it is the sinner's own personal obedience that is the proper substitute for sacrifice; and this conclusion the apostle ought to have drawn. But this is not the doctrine of Scripture. True; obedience is better than all whole burnt-offerings; but it is not man's own obedience that is to occupy the place of burnt-offerings. The apostle's view of the psalm is, that it points out Christ's doing of the will of God by the offering of Himself in sacrifice as the thing which was to supply the place of the inefficient offerings of the law. It must therefore have been designed from the first as a prediction, not only negatively of the abolition of the sacrifices and offerings of the law, but also positively of the substitution of Christ in their room; otherwise the apostle stands convicted of having misapplied the word of God.

Are we then to suppose that the whole of the fortieth Psalm refers to Christ? This conclusion cannot well be avoided, for it runs in the same person from beginning to end, and no indication is given of a change of subject. Are we then to exclude all reference to David himself? Not exactly so. The predictions of

the book of Psalms seem all to rise up out of the psalmist's own experience as their groundwork. The circumstances and events of his life, the feelings and sentiments of his heart, the persecutions to which he was exposed, and the throne upon which he sat, form a basis upon which his mind, elevated by the Spirit of God, rears a superstructure of Messianic predictions. The machinery is all suggested by his own condition. The feelings expressed are such as he himself has experienced. And thus it happens, that in the most thoroughly Messianic psalms there are some things which admit of application to David himself; for Christ and His people resemble one another in a variety of particulars. There are other things, however, which, as Peter affirms (Acts ii. 29-31), do not bear to be applied to any but the Messiah Himself; the Psalmist in uttering them having been elevated by the Spirit of God to a point far above his own individual position. The whole of the psalm is descriptive of Christ; but it takes its colouring, it borrows its imagery, from the experiences, and trials, and sorrows of David.

There is one verse of this psalm which seems to furnish a strong argument against the idea of its being Messianic, viz. ver. 12: "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head, therefore my heart faileth me." To this objection it is replied by some, that *אִשְׁתָּ* means not only iniquity, but also the punishment of sin, calamity, wretchedness (See *Ges. Thesaurus*, p. 1000), and that this latter meaning ought to be assigned to it in the verse under consideration. This is the view taken by S. Capellus, who translates *אִשְׁתָּ*, *pœnas meas*. But even though you retain the more common signification of the word, it does not furnish an objection of much force against the Messianic interpretation of the psalm. For what must such words as you find in ver. 12 mean in the mouth of Christ, but the iniquities which He has taken upon Him? They are not His own sins, but the sins of others laid to His charge. They are His by imputation; they are reckoned to Him, and He willingly takes the burden. Hence in 2 Cor. v. 21 He is said to be made sin for us, though He knew no sin Himself. And there is another consideration, which makes it plain that even the 12th verse of the fortieth Psalm does not describe David's own case, but

refers, like the rest of the psalm, to the Messiah ; and that is the circumstance that there is no prayer for pardon introduced after the mention of iniquities innumerable like the hairs of the head. Now, one cannot help thinking, that if the Psalmist had been speaking of himself only, he would have supplicated, as in other such cases, the forgiveness of the sins he was confessing.

Vers. 5-10. The passage quoted by the apostle in vers. 5-7 is put into the mouth of Christ, and it is said to be spoken by Him when *εἰσερχόμενος εἰς τὸν κόσμον*. To the common idea that these words refer to the birth of Christ, it has been objected, that there are many things in the psalm, both before and after what is quoted, which can only be explained of what happened during our Lord's abode upon earth ; and therefore it has been supposed, that the introductory clause used by the apostle must be applied to the commencement of His public ministry. But though the fortieth Psalm, taken as a whole, plainly refers to the period of Christ's deepest suffering and distress, yet this does not hinder the application of the verses quoted to the time of His advent ; for in them he looks back to an earlier period. "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire ; then said I, Lo, I come." When said He this ? Before the suffering state began which the psalm describes. We must understand the apostle's words, therefore, to refer literally to His coming into the world, and not to His entrance upon public life.

The various offerings mentioned, *θυσίαν καὶ προσφοράν, ὀλοκαυτώματα καὶ περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, are designed to describe the Levitical sacrifices as a whole. *Θυσίαν* is the translation of *זֶבֶח*, which means a bloody sacrifice in general, but also sometimes specifically a peace-offering ; and this must be the meaning here, as other kinds of sacrifices are mentioned. *Προσφοράν*, representing *מִנְחָה*, denotes a meat-offering, an offering of the fruits of the earth. *Ὀλοκαυτώματα* and *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, corresponding, the one to *עֹלָה*, and the other to *חַטָּאת*, mean burnt-offerings or holocausts, and sin-offerings. The Greek *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* is elliptical, *θυσία* requiring to be supplied.

The last clause of ver. 5 exhibits a singular deviation from the original Hebrew : *לִי מִנְחָה*. These words are rendered in the Septuagint *σῶμα δὲ κατηρτίσω μοι*, and the apostle adopts

this rendering. Now what is the meaning of the clause as it stands in the book of Psalms? It was long the prevailing idea that it contained an allusion to the practice described in Ex. xxi. 6, Deut. xv. 17, of boring the ear of a servant, in token that he was to be a servant to his master for life; and its meaning was thus supposed to be, "Thou hast bored mine ears; Thou hast made me Thy servant perpetually." To this view, however, it may be objected, that it was only one ear that was perforated in the case referred to. It is quite a different verb, too, viz. *רָצַץ*, that is employed in Exodus to describe the process. Had the Psalmist intended to make an allusion to the ancient rite in question, he would doubtless have employed the very words used in the description of it. Besides, *כָּרַח* rather signifies to dig, to excavate, than to bore. It is now generally supposed, therefore, that the words of the Psalmist are rather analogous to such expressions as these, in Isa. l. 5, *פָּתַח לִי אָזְנוֹ*; and in 1 Sam. xx. 2, *וַיִּלֶּח אָזְנוֹי*, and mean, "Thou hast opened ears to me; Thou hast made me Thy willing and obedient servant." *כָּרַח*, however, is a much stronger word than either *פָּתַח* or *וַיִּלֶּח*; and therefore it may be made a question whether it refers, as these two words always do, to the removal of obstructions which have impeded hearing, or whether it has not rather been designedly chosen to describe the original excavation of ears, the first construction or making of them. When this word, for example, is applied to a ditch, it does not mean gathering out rubbish that has fallen into it, but it means digging it so as to make a ditch where there was none before. And, on the same principle, the words before us must mean, "Thou hast dug out ears for me—Thou hast made me a being with human ears—Thou hast made me a man;" and the inference from this is, that there is a consequent obligation to do the will of God: "Thou hast given to me powers, organs, and faculties; and the employment of these according to Thy will is a duty incumbent upon me."

Various methods have been tried to account for the difference between the Greek and Hebrew texts. Some have supposed that the apostle of his own accord wrote *σῶμα* instead of *ὦρα* or *ῥα*, and that the Septuagint was afterwards altered to bring it into agreement with him. But this view is altogether inadmissible; for there is no evidence to show that *ῥα* was known

as a reading before the days of Irenæus ; and it is quite inconceivable, that when the Septuagint was so much in the hands of Jews, its true reading could be displaced by one from the Christian Scriptures. We are shut up, therefore, to the conclusion, that *σῶμα* was the original reading of the Septuagint, and that the apostle took his reading from it. Others have imagined that the Septuagint reading corresponds to what originally stood in the Hebrew text ; and that the Hebrew word was altered by the Jews after the days of Christ, in order to weaken the testimony borne to His Messiahship by the Old Testament. Peirce suggests *אֶלֶף*, then a body, as what may have been the original reading ; and others have conjectured *עצמות*, bones. But if either of these readings, or any other, had been the original one, it is quite incredible that it would have disappeared from every copy at so late a period, and not a trace of it have ever afterwards been seen. All authority, then, goes to prove that *עצמות* is the true Hebrew reading, and *σῶμα* the true Greek one. The question, therefore, comes back upon us, Why did the Seventy deviate from the text which they had before them ? Perhaps they might imagine that the phrase employed in the psalm was not quite clear and intelligible ; and viewing it as a figurative expression, where part was put for the whole, their object might be to resolve the figure. And in fact their version expresses substantially the same idea as the Hebrew text, only somewhat more fully. What says the Hebrew ? “Thou hast dug out ears for me—Thou hast made me a being with human ears—Thou hast made me a man.” What says the Greek ? “Thou hast organized a body for me.” The two expressions coincide perfectly as to their essential meaning. The possession of human ears, the possession of a human body, obliges to the service of God : all powers received from the Most High ought to be employed in doing His will. Accordingly we are told in Phil. ii. 7, that Christ’s being made in the likeness of men, was equivalent to His taking upon Him the form of a servant ; and in Matt. xx. 28, we hear Him saying to His disciples, “Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant ; even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Our Lord received human ears from God, or, which is the same

thing, He received a human body from God; and it is His own frequent declaration, that He was sent not to do His own will, but the will of His Father in heaven. "I must work the works of Him that sent me while it is day" (John ix. 4).

It has been made a question, whether the occurrence of the word *σῶμα* in the passage, as exhibited in the Septuagint, is not the apostle's main reason for citing it, and whether it would have equally answered his purpose if *ῥήματα* had been the rendering there made. Doubtless it would have served his purpose as really, though not perhaps so obviously. His object is to show that burnt-offerings and sin-offerings never had the power of propitiating God's favour, but that this end only could be accomplished by Christ's doing the will of God. Each man's own obedience, if it were perfect, would be the true offering for him to present to God. But this offering, in the case of no man, is without spot and blemish; and therefore in the case of no man can it be accepted as satisfactory. Christ, therefore, became our substitute; and His work was to do what we could not accomplish—to yield a perfect obedience to God in our nature. His ear was ever attentive to His Father's voice; it was His meat and His drink to do His Father's will. And accordingly the apostle has already (Heb. v. 7–9) exhibited His perfect obedience, amid sorrows and distresses pressing heavily upon Him, as the substantial essence of His propitiation. It was not obedience simply, however, that was necessary, but obedience unto death—to the effusion of His blood; and the apostle accordingly declares, that the will of God was accomplished by Him through the offering of His body once for all. Now the question is, whether such an idea as this could have been gathered from the psalm, as it stands in the Hebrew text. Undoubtedly, when *σῶμα* is used, the idea strikes you more readily, for you infer at once that the Saviour's body was to take the place of burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin, and that it must therefore suffer a violent death, as they did. But even with *ῥήματα* as the reading, you would come to the same conclusion, though more slowly; for, after finding that the Messiah's doing of the will of God was represented as the true propitiation, and not slain beasts, you would at once start the question, How could there be any analogy between the slaughter of these beasts and

Christ's doing of the will of God, unless that will required that He should die like them? His doing of the will of God is represented as putting an end to burnt-offerings and sin-offerings; and therefore plainly it is implied that He Himself takes their place. If obedience on His part, short of death, would have sufficed, then how came these animal sacrifices to be instituted by God at all? If you say they were instituted simply to exhibit the doom which sin merits, then the necessity for them would have been as great now as ever. They have ceased, however, because all they taught in reference to the demerit of sin has been far more impressively taught in the person of Christ dying as a victim upon the accursed tree. They have ceased, because supplanted by Him; and in His human body received from God He has made a real expiation, to which they stood in the relation of types and shadows. This is the doctrine of the psalm, whether you follow the Hebrew text or the Septuagint translation quoted by the apostle.

The clause *ἐν κεφαλίδι βιβλίου γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ* requires some consideration. Doubtless in the psalm *רִבְרִיבָה* denotes roll or volume of the book, so designated from being rolled round a cylinder, which is also the etymology of our own word volume; and *κεφαλίδι βιβλίου* must be viewed as designating the same thing, though *κεφαλὴς* itself primarily refers to the knob or extremity of the stick round which the parchments circled. Some have imagined that the phrase here means commencement of the book, or chapter of the book; but this is gratuitously to place the seventy translators at variance with their original. Not even in classic Greek is *κεφαλὴς* the word employed to denote chapter, but *κεφάλαιον* (Steph. *Thes.* 4912). The book here mentioned must be viewed as denoting particularly the Pentateuch, because in the days of David, who penned this passage, hardly any more of the Old Testament was written. The meaning of *γέγραπται περὶ ἐμοῦ* admits of no doubt. It indicates that something was written in the Pentateuch regarding, or concerning, the person spoken of. But Hengstenberg maintains that the meaning of the corresponding Hebrew words is altogether different—that *לְפָנַי* must signify that which is prescribed to me, or laid down in the law as my duty. In defence of this rendering he appeals to 2 Kings xxii. 13, where

the analogous phrase *הִפְתַּח עָלֵינוּ* occurs: "Because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is written to us," or prescribed to us. And he fortifies this conclusion by referring to Josh. i. 7 and 1 Kings ii. 3; but these two passages have no bearing upon the question, because the phraseology is altogether different: they only show that the Pentateuch contains moral prescriptions, which no one denies. Gesenius takes the same view as Hengstenberg, not indeed of the whole sentence, but of the clause under consideration; and so does Rosenmüller. Now it must be allowed that in 2 Kings xxii. 13 *לֵךְ* does bear most naturally the signification assigned to it by these distinguished critics; but it is equally true that, in connection with verbs of speaking, writing, and knowing, it bears several other significations. It is applied to designate the material upon which you write, be it parchment or stone, as in Deut. vi. 9, xi. 20, Ex. xxxiv. 1. It is also employed to mark out the party to whom you send a communication, whether it prescribes anything to him or not, as in 2 Chron. xxx. 1, Ezra iv. 7. And it is likewise used to describe the subject, be it person or thing, about which or concerning which communication is made. Of this last signification you have undoubted examples, as Gesenius himself allows, in Judg. ix. 3, "And the brethren of his mother spake *לְיִשְׁבָּע*, regarding him;" in 1 Kings v. 13 (iv. 33), "Solomon spake *לְעֵץ הָיָהוּב*, concerning trees:" see also Gen. xli. 15, Job xxx. 16; and others might be produced. Now this is the signification which the LXX. have assigned to *לֵךְ* in the clause before us, and the apostle has taken the same signification; and why should it not be adopted? Rabbi Solomon takes this view, though he supposes the psalm to refer to David himself and the children of Israel; and in order to show that something has been written concerning them in the Pentateuch, he quotes the passage (Ex. xxiv. 7) where they are introduced as saying, "All that the Lord God hath said we will do, and be obedient." Aben-Ezra translates the words in the same manner, though he applies them only to David himself; and with the view of explaining them, supposes that the Psalmist in the time of his affliction had vowed a vow, and caused it to be recorded, and that this record is the book to which allusion is made (*Thesaurus*

Theologico-Philologicus, tom. i. p. 622). What, then, is the reason for giving a new translation of these words? The reason is not philological, but theological. The reason is, the supposition that the psalm relates only to David himself, and not at all to the Messiah; and there is a difficulty felt in pointing out where anything is said regarding David in the Pentateuch. But this reason vanishes whenever you allow the Messiah to be the subject of the psalm; and the translation given by the LXX. is sufficient to prove that this view prevailed long before the days of the apostle. Nay, I am persuaded that the original Hebrew phrase, not to speak of the Seventy's translation, of itself supplies a powerful argument in support of the Messianic interpretation. For conceive the psalm to be purely Davidic, and is there not something presumptuous in David's singling himself out from all other Jews, as if he first did the will of God, or did it in a way reached by none of his predecessors,—as if, moreover, the book of the law was addressed to him more than to the rest of God's people? The graphic language, "Lo, I come," manifestly points to a greater than David; and the phrase לָקַח עָלַי, well translated *γράφεται περὶ ἐμοῦ*, declares the fact that something had been written regarding the personage spoken of in the Pentateuch. And as if to confirm the view given by the Septuagint, and to warrant the apostle's adoption of it, our Lord Himself speaks in Luke xxiv. 44 of the things *γεγραμμένα περὶ ἐμοῦ*, written concerning me, in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms. And if it be asked, where are those things about Christ in the books of Moses specially referred to in the passage we are considering? the answer is, that you have them in the promises given to our first parents, and repeated more fully and clearly to Abraham; and you have them also in the sacrifices and ceremonial rites instituted by Moses, which were all prefigurations of the great atoning sacrifice of Christ. It is a most unfounded assertion, surely, that even the apostles do not represent the Levitical offerings as types of the sacrifice of Christ, but only take occasion from them to exhibit Him as a high priest, and His death as an expiatory sacrifice (Ernesti, p. 825). The whole Epistle to the Hebrews exclaims against such a statement. What are the five last chapters we have been considering, but

a minute and laboured comparison of the one with the other? And what do the words *σκιά* and *παραβολή* and *ἀντίτυπος* mean, but that the former were shadows and likenesses and prefigurative types of the latter? And what evidence have we that the Jews took such a view of their own sacrificial offerings? Doubtless multitudes of them did not take it, but rested in the law, as of itself sufficient to save them. But this was their great mistake, and what led them to reject the promised Deliverer when He came. The true question is, What view did the Old Testament warrant pious Israelites to form? Did it not, while prescribing animal sacrifices, speak of them in disparaging terms, as not sufficient to satisfy God, as in the fortieth Psalm? Did it not, while describing these offerings as presented on account of sins, declare that it was the Great Deliverer who was to turn away unrighteousness from Jacob?

Did it not, while requiring the sins of the people to be confessed over the sacrifices, and thus laid upon them, describe the Messiah as having the iniquity of us all laid upon Him? (Isa. liii. 6.) Did it not, whilst appointing the animals offered in sacrifice to be slain, that their blood might gush out, represent the Messiah as wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and brought as a lamb to the slaughter? (Isa. liii. 5, 7.) In the Old Testament itself the prefigurative character of animal sacrifices is not obscurely taught; and when the apostle reasoned from them to Christ, as in the chapter before us, he was not making bare assertions of his own, but he was proceeding upon principles which well-instructed Jews could not but acknowledge to themselves had a basis in their own Scriptures. If the analogies he points out had been purely his own invention, a mere afterthought, his arguments could not possibly have made the smallest impression upon any Jewish mind. Fanciful analogies may have weight with parties already convinced, but they are mere chaff as addressed to a real opponent.

The part of the psalm that is quoted in ver. 7 is thrown into a different shape by the apostle. He makes *τοῦ ποιῆσαι* dependent upon *ἦκω*; whereas in the Septuagint it is governed by a word coming after, *ἡβουλήθην*, which the apostle omits. This change of construction, however, does not make the

smallest change upon the sense; and the reason, doubtless, why it was made, was that no more of the psalm might be quoted than was really necessary to the purpose in hand.

In vers. 8 and 9 the apostle repeats the quotation, that his readers might deliberately consider it, and that he might make it the ground of an important inference bearing upon his subject. It has been remarked, that in repeating it he leaves out the word *σῶμα*, and all that clause containing it, as if to indicate that his conclusion did not rest specially upon that word, but upon the general sense of the whole passage. And what is meant by *ἀναρπῆ τὸ πρῶτον*? He, that is, Christ, coming into the world, taketh away the first. What is meant by the first? It is the sacrifices, and offerings, and burnt-offerings, and offerings for sin. These the Saviour abolished, as was predicted in the book of Psalms. Their abolition is one thing which David foretold. They are abrogated. They are no longer binding. Their day lasted from Moses to Christ, but it is now gone for ever. And what is meant by the second? Plainly it is Christ's doing of the will of God. This He substituted in the room of all the ancient sacrifices. They continued in force till He came, but now He is the only medium of access to God. That the doing of the will of God includes not only the Saviour's active obedience all His life through, but also His passive obedience, or His obedience unto death, we have already shown; and the apostle, in ver. 10, takes care to draw special attention to this circumstance. Thus it appeared that, even in the days of David, intimation had been given of a new order of things to be established by the Messiah, involving the abolition of the old sacrifices, and the substitution of another of superior efficacy.

Ver. 10. This verse shows how the will of God stood connected with the expiation of man's guilt. Plainly it is the will of God as carried into effect by Christ that is meant. And the special act of obedience on the part of Christ that is brought into view is His submission to death, not as exclusive of His life of holy obedience, but as the culminating point of it, and that without which all the rest would have failed to accomplish what man's exigencies required. We have already seen that the contrast presented in the psalm between sacrifices of bulls and goats, and the Messiah doing the will of God, can only be

accounted for on the supposition that that will included His taking their place, and doing something to which their slaughter bore a resemblance. But what likeness is there between the death of a brute beast and morality in human life? You get no likeness until you bring into view the Saviour's violent death upon the cross. It has been well remarked, that *ἐν* and *διὰ* are here used with marked propriety; *ἐν* pointing out God's will as the original ground and source of the scheme of redemption, and *διὰ* indicating the channel through which the divine purpose was carried into effect. And this is conformable with all the other representations of Scripture on the subject, which never countenance the false though not uncommon idea, that it was Christ's death which first produced favourable feelings towards man in the divine mind. On the contrary, Christ's death itself was a fruit of God's love. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The divine will or purpose stood first in the order of causation, as is also declared in Eph. i. 5, 9, 11, 2 Tim. i. 9; then Christ's obedience unto death comes in as a remedial measure, its special purpose being to meet the claims of the broken law; and lastly, there are the blessings of redemption, pardon, and acceptance flowing through that death to believers. *ἁγιασμένοι* expresses the same idea as *κεκαθαρμένους* in ver. 2, and *καθαριεῖ* in chap. ix. 14; and being employed to describe what immediately results from the sacrifice of Christ, these words do not refer to the inward change denominated sanctification, but to the removal of guilt from the conscience. They are both employed in the Septuagint as renderings of the Hebrew word כִּפָּר, whose appropriate meaning is to expiate, to make atonement for an offence. Through the offering of Christ's body we have atonement made for us. Our sins are blotted out, and we are dedicated to God's service. It is Christ's sacrifice that reconciles us to God, and brings us into the position of accepted children, to be guided by His Spirit, and prepared by His grace for eternal life. *ἁγιασμένοι ἔσμεν*, as a perfect tense, does not express something taking place at all times: we are sanctified or reconciled by Christ's offering; as if the meaning were, generation after generation sinners are thus brought to God. To express this idea a present

tense would have been employed, *ἀγιαζόμενοι ἐσμεν* or *ἀγιαζόμεθα*. The words actually used by the apostle must mean : either, we Christians have been reconciled to God by the death of His Son, and so are now His people ; or, we sinners of mankind have had expiation made for us by Christ, and so are now invited to repentance. The use of the first person, which must include the apostle himself, seems to decide in favour of the former view. It has been made a question whether *ἐφάπαξ* should be understood as qualifying *ἡγιασμένοι ἐσμεν* or *προσφορᾶς*. This is a question of no moment, for the meaning is the same in either case ; and, in fact, both collocations of words are actually made by the apostle. In the 2d verse *ἅπαξ* is conjoined with *κεκαθαρμένους*, which means the same as *ἡγιασμένοι* ; and in chap. ix. 28, *ἅπαξ* is coupled with *προσενεχθεὶς*, which expresses the same idea as *προσφορᾶς*. The arrangement of the words, however, certainly favours the idea that *ἐφάπαξ* here qualifies *προσφορᾶς* ; and the same idea is confirmed by what follows : for the apostle, as if starting from the word *ἐφάπαξ*, immediately proceeds to exhibit the one sacrifice of Christ, in contrast with the numerous offerings that were presented day after day by the Levitical priests.

Vers. 11–18. On account of the great importance of the subject, the apostle renews the comparison already made between Christ and the Levitical priests ; and he does so with the view of preparing the way for another citation from the Old Testament confirmatory of his doctrine. This renewed comparison is made in vers. 11–14 ; and the passage is quoted, and a conclusion drawn from it, in vers. 15–18.

Vers. 11, 12. *Καὶ* connects the whole section (vers. 11–14) with what goes before, and points back particularly to *ἐφάπαξ*. It is a re-statement of what is embodied in that word that follows. Yet the connection is not such that *καὶ* can be rendered namely, as Tholuck proposes. True, it does not introduce a new thought, but it introduces the old thought in new aspects. Two readings are found in ver. 11, viz. *ἀρχιερεὺς* and *ιερεὺς*, both supported by weighty authorities, and both having defenders among modern critics. How *ἀρχιερεὺς* should have come to be substituted in the room of *ιερεὺς* we can imagine, seeing it is the high priest of whom the apostle has chiefly been

speaking, and the very phrase here employed occurs in chap. v. 1, viii. 3; but if ἀρχιερεὺς was the original reading, it is not so easy to conceive how it should have collapsed into ἱερεὺς. Besides, as the apostle has taken κατ' ἐναντιὸν in its definite sense of *yearly* in the preceding sections, speaking of the high priest, chap. ix. 25, x. 1, it is requisite to understand καθ' ἡμέραν in this verse as literally meaning *daily*; and of course in this case ἱερεὺς is the only proper reading, for it was the ordinary priests who performed the daily ministrations. It is true that καθ' ἡμέραν is used in chap. vii. 27 with regard to the high priest, but there is no contrast there to prevent it from receiving the more general meaning of *continually*. The specific feature of the section on which we are now entering is, that it is not the high priest in particular, but the priests in general, the whole priestly order, who are now brought upon the stage; and it is shown with regard to them all, that the offerings which they presented of one kind or another every day were inefficient, and that Christ's one offering of Himself took the place of all ancient sacrifices, and perfectly accomplished what they only foreshadowed.

Another peculiarity of the comparison instituted in this section lies in the reference that is made to the posture of the priests mentioned. It is indeed said by De Wette, that ἐστῆκε λειτουργῶν simply describes the ministry or work of the priests; and that in Deut. i. 38, x. 8, Judg. xx. 28, the word "standing" is so employed. But even in those passages the standing is mentioned separately from the service—"stand before the Lord to minister," and therefore means not the service itself, but the posture in which it was performed; and as the apostle also uses two words, we cannot doubt that it is his purpose to draw special attention to the attitude of the ministering priests. And, accordingly, when he speaks of Christ in ver. 12, he tells us that He sat down,—a striking contrast, and one which throws light upon the character of the two priesthoods. The posture of the Jewish priests, as compared with that of Christ, indicated inferiority, and not only so, but also and chiefly uncompleted service; whereas the sitting down of Christ was a token of the full accomplishment of His work, and the consequent dignity to which He was raised. De Wette calls in question the view

which has prevailed regarding these expressions from the days of Chrysostom downwards, that they indicate, the one a position of servitude, and the other of rule or government; and he says they only mean, on the one hand, continuation of priestly work, and on the other, cessation from priestly work. This is true so far as it goes. But the appearance of Christ, and more particularly the sitting down of Christ at the right hand of God, was more than His ceasing to offer sacrifice. It was the reward of the perfect accomplishment of His work, and the token of the acceptance of His sacrifice. "Because He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, therefore God hath highly exalted Him" (Phil. ii. 9). His session at the right hand of God denotes His participation in the rule of the universe. And the argument against this view founded by De Wette upon the following verse, that it only indicates rest and quiet expectation, is amply refuted by what Paul says in 1 Cor. xv. 25, commenting upon these same words of Ps. cx. 1: "For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet." Reigning and sitting at God's right hand are in the apostle's view one and the same thing. If Christ sits, it is a throne He sits upon, and not a mere place of rest. Carpzov is right in placing the main stress upon *καθ' ἡμέραν* and *πολλάκις* in ver. 11, frequency of repetition in the case of the Jewish offerings being the substance and heart of the argument; and the statement here made regarding priests in general, is the same as that made in chap. ix. 25 regarding the high priest in particular. The repetition of their offerings proved their inefficiency, and they were such, *αἵτινες*, as could not take away sin. *Περιλεῖν* has the same meaning as *ἀφαιρεῖν* in ver. 4, only it is a stronger word, meaning to take away all round, to take away completely.

There are two readings in ver. 12, viz. *αὐτός* and *οὗτος*, both supported by numerous and weighty authorities. Griesbach retains *αὐτός*, but he regards the evidence for *οὗτος* as being equal, if not superior; and Lachmann admits this reading into the text. *Οὗτος* is the more easy reading; but for that very reason one sees how it might originate, as a simplification of *αὐτός*. If you adopt *οὗτος*, then you must translate it, "this Priest," as forming a contrast to *πᾶς ἱερεὺς* in the preceding verse. But if you retain *αὐτός*, "Himself," then certainly it

does appear to be used here with something of that emphasis with which it was applied by the disciples of Pythagoras to their master. True, there is no difficulty in ascertaining from the connection who is meant, but that does not alter the fact that αὐτός in the nominative always means, not "he" simply, but "he himself," some party to whom special attention is drawn, or who is exhibited in contrast with another. It is only in the oblique cases that αὐτός is used as a simple personal pronoun (Winer, § 22, 4).

It admits of doubt whether εἰς τὸ διηνεκές refers to what precedes or to what follows. In defence of the former connection, it is argued by Beza, with whom Tholuck agrees, that the same phrase is applied in the 14th verse to the enduring efficacy of Christ's sacrifice. In support of the same view it might be further said, that the grand object of the apostle in the whole argument is to show that not many offerings were required from the High Priest of the Christian church, but only one single offering to avail for all time. Another argument not to be overlooked is furnished by the fact, that wherever this phrase occurs in the Epistle to the Hebrews, it follows the word which it is intended to qualify, and its structure best fits it for following. See chap. vii. 3, x. 1, 14. On the other hand, however, it must be observed that ἔστηκεν in ver. 11 plainly stands in contrast with ἐκάθισεν in ver. 12; and that as καθ' ἡμέραν is connected with the former word, so εἰς τὸ διηνεκές must be viewed as qualifying the latter. But to this it may be replied, that καθ' ἡμέραν is more properly to be viewed as qualifying λειτουργῶν, and therefore εἰς τὸ διηνεκές naturally falls to be associated with προσενέγκας θυσίαν. And if it be said that μίαν sufficiently expresses the oneness of Christ's offering, the reply to this is, first, that in ver. 11 you have several words all bearing upon the endless repetition of Jewish sacrifices—καθ' ἡμέραν, and πολλάκις, and οὐδέποτε; and secondly, that εἰς τὸ διηνεκές does not express precisely the same idea as μίαν. For as, on the one hand, καθ' ἡμέραν and πολλάκις exhibit the numerousness of the offerings of the law, and οὐδέποτε indicates their want for ever of expiating power; so, on the other, μίαν points to the oneness of Christ's offering, and εἰς τὸ διηνεκές subjoins the idea that, though one, it was valid for a perpetuity.

Lamb. Bos and Macknight, who both adopt the distribution of words we are defending, make εἰς τὸ διηγεῖσθαι mean, through His whole life; but this sense disturbs the contrast intended between the two verses, and it is quite inconsistent with the structure of the phrase itself, which always looks forward to coming time. See chap. vii. 3, x. 1, 14.

Ver. 13. This verse describes the views and expectations of Christ with respect to the consequences of His sacrifice. Seated at the right hand of God, He has no more sacrificial work. Τὸ λοιπόν, for the time left, henceforth, He waits till His enemies be made His footstool. He never returns, like the priests of old, to resume attendance at the altar. His one offering retains its efficacy for ever. And if any should object to the completeness of Christ's work, that sin still continues rampant in the world, the apostle brings into view the famous verse of Ps. cx., already adduced at chap. i. 13, and applied to the Saviour, in which the actual subjugation of all sinful beings is spoken of as coming after His exaltation to glory. Instrumentalities were brought into operation at the time of His death that were in the end to triumph; and He has only now to superintend these instrumentalities, and to wait for the accomplishment of the promise given to Him by His Father.

Bleek and De Wette find a discrepancy between the verse before us and 1 Cor. xv. 22-28: for here, say they, all enemies are represented as subdued before Christ leaves the right hand of God; whereas, according to Corinthians, He first comes to the earth, and then follows the destruction of hostile powers. But this alleged discrepancy is occasioned by attaching too local a conception to the right hand of God. What does session at God's right hand mean? It means participation in the rule of the universe. But Christ's return to this world, so far from being an abdication of His authority, is an exercise of it. Who would say that a prince leaving his palace and his capital, and making a royal progress to a distant part of his dominions, thereby gave up his title and his power? The thing that is meant by the figure of sitting at God's right hand, really continues after Christ's return to this world. He does not abandon the seat of rule and power when He comes to judgment. Against this misconception, against this confounding of sign

with thing signified, of the mere drapery of a thought with the thought itself, Paul is most careful to guard in the passage of Corinthians referred to; for there, first of all, in ver. 23, he speaks of Christ's *παρουσία*: then, says he, in ver. 24, is the end, and the destruction of all hostile powers takes place. And what do we find in ver. 25? *δεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸν βασιλεύειν*, "for He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet." Here the promise of Ps. cx. is described as fully carried into effect after Christ's return to this world; and the apostle designedly uses the word *βασιλεύειν* instead of *καθῆσθαι ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ Θεοῦ*, to show that he did not understand sitting at God's right hand to imply confinement to heaven, but properly to indicate the possession of regal power.

How are Christ's enemies to be subdued? There is a gradual subjugation of them going on century after century. The gospel is spreading more and more widely in the world. And many hopeful symptoms are exhibited in the present aspect of things. Old superstitions are losing their hold of men's minds. Systems of idolatry are tottering to their fall. The missionaries of the cross, too, are now visiting all the regions of the earth. And we have reason, both from present appearances and from promises of Scripture, to expect in coming years a far more rapid spread of the gospel than has ever yet been witnessed. The time is manifestly drawing nigh when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the tops of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it (Isa. ii. 2). But is it in this way only that the enemies of Christ are to be subdued and brought under His power? Are all His rebellious creatures to be converted into willing and obedient subjects? Too plainly does Scripture teach the reverse. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power (2 Thess. i. 7-9). Impenitent transgressors now carry it with a high hand against Christ, and proudly and derisively exclaim, Where is the promise of His coming? But their boasting shall be silenced, their schemes shall be utterly overthrown, and they themselves shall

be driven away into darkness. Tholuck, without embracing the idea of a universal restoration, lingers over it with some degree of fondness; but unless it could be established by the most decisive evidence, it is a most dangerous because a most pleasing speculation. It will not, however, bear the test of Scripture. The distinction made by Gregory of Nyssa, and viewed with favour by Tholuck, between *καταργεῖν* and *ὑποτάσσειν*, as used in 1 Cor. xv. 24–28,—viz. that the former describes an overthrow by power and a reduction to ruin, inefficiency, and the latter a willing subjugation by faith,—though it is not without plausibility when you look to the etymology and general use of the words, is yet altogether unwarranted by the structure of the passage, and would, in fact, involve it in contradiction. For in ver. 24 the apostle mentions all rule, and all authority and power, as being destroyed by Christ (*καταργήσῃ*). Now if these words denote wicked potentates, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers, whether satanic, as is commonly supposed, or human, as Usteri (Paul. *Lehrbegr.* p. 354) is inclined to think, then some personal and intelligent beings are to be destroyed, according to Gregory's own view of *καταργεῖν*. On the other hand, what are the objects mentioned in ver. 27, where *ὑπέταξεν* is employed? They are not *πάντας ἀνθρώπους*, but *πάντα*,—all things, with the single exception, says the apostle, of God Himself. All things, personal and impersonal, human and satanic, are included among the objects to which *ὑπέταξεν* refers. Is more requisite to show that *ὑποτάσσεσθαι* does not here mean a voluntary submission by faith? What, then, is the difference between *καταργεῖν* and *ὑποτάσσειν*, as here used by the apostle? Manifestly they are not mutually exclusive, as Gregory supposes, but they stand to one another in the relation of species and genus. *Καταργεῖν* means, as Gregory rightly supposes, subjugation by power, a forcible and violent overthrow. But *ὑποτάσσειν* includes every kind of conquest that is made by Christ, whether through love or by force, whether of persons or of things, because its objects are everything in the universe but God. *ὑποτάσσειν* includes *καταργεῖν*, but it includes a great deal more. All things are to be put under the feet of Christ. To sinners of mankind, however, there is given the choice of a voluntary submission issuing in their eternal

happiness, or of a forced subjugation involving their eternal ruin. "Kiss ye the Son, lest He be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little." God shall have glory from all His creatures. The riches of His grace shall be displayed in the everlasting blessedness of those who repent and believe, and the honour of His justice shall be manifested in the eternal destruction of impenitent transgressors.

With regard to the force of the word *ἔως* in ver. 13, and what is to follow the complete subjugation of Christ's enemies, see the remarks made on chap. i. 13, where the words of the psalm are first quoted.

Ver. 14. The principle affirmed in this verse has already been stated several times (chap. ix. 12, 14, 28, x. 10, 12). It is here introduced as the ground of the denial made in the preceding verses, that Christ was ever again to return to this world for expiatory service. It is exhibited in a brief and emphatic form, which fitted it for being laid up in the memory as a gem of heavenly truth. Every word is full of meaning. *Τετέλειωκεν*, as a perfect tense, describes the work of expiation as having been completely finished by Christ, but as maintaining its efficacy to the present moment, and *εἰς τὸ διηνεκές* prolongs its efficacy to all coming ages. *Ἀγιαζομένους* designates those who share the benefits of this all-perfect expiation; and it is put in the present tense, because, though the expiation was completed long ago, yet the application of it is continually going on. In every age there are men consecrated to God through virtue of the atonement made by Christ when He died. He has laid a solid basis for the pardon and reconciliation of sinners till the end of time. Here as elsewhere, generally in this epistle, both *τελείωω* and *ἀγιάζω* are used, not in a moral sense, but in the sacrificial sense of purging from guilt. Christ's one offering hath perfectly expiated the sins of all who may at any time be touched with His blood, and so dedicated to God.

Vers. 15–18. In these verses another scriptural proof is adduced by the apostle in support of the principle he is laying down, viz. the same passage which he had already quoted from Jer. xxxi. 31–33, at chap. viii. 8–12. As adduced formerly, it was intended to prove God's purpose of establishing a new covenant; its object is to show that sin-offerings were to come to

an end under the new order of things : *μαρτυρεῖ δὲ ἡμῖν καὶ τὸ Πνεῦμα*—and the Holy Ghost also beareth witness to us. De Wette, Stuart, and others, understand *ἡμῖν* as referring to the readers of Scripture in general, as if the meaning were, “the Spirit declares to us all.” But this is not conformable to the Hellenistic use of *μαρτυρεῖν* with the dative of a person, which expresses the idea, not of telling something to that person, but of saying something in his favour, or in confirmation of his doctrine or claims, as in John iii. 26, 28, v. 33, Acts x. 43, xv. 8, xxii. 5. The same usage is also to be found in the classics, as in Herod. iv. 29, viii. 94; and it abounds particularly in the Attic dialect. The meaning of the words before us, therefore, is, “The Spirit beareth witness to us in the way of confirming what we have laid down.” This view is adopted by J. Capellus, Grotius, and Wolf; and it is an additional argument in support of it, that you require not to suppose an ellipse of the thing testified, as in the other case.

This passage furnishes a very decided argument in support of the divinity of the Holy Ghost; for while the apostle says it is the Holy Ghost who speaks in Jeremiah, we find in the passage itself that the speaker is designated *ᾧτι*, which is the peculiar and incommunicable name of the Divine Being. There are two readings in this verse, viz. the common one, *προειρηκέναι*, and *εἰρηκέναι*. The most weighty Uncial manuscripts are in favour of *εἰρηκέναι*—A, C, D, E; and Griesbach puts it upon a level with the received reading, while Lachmann and Tischendorf give it the preference. The sense remains much the same in either case. What is it that *προειρηκέναι* or *εἰρηκέναι* refers to, and where does the part of the citation commence which is here adduced as proof? It being the 17th verse only that bears directly upon the apostle’s argument, J. Capellus, Grotius, Limborch, Carpzov, and others, have regarded it as the apodosis, and have arranged the whole of the 16th verse under the government of *προειρηκέναι* as the protasis. And this view has prevailed from an early period; for there are some mss. which insert *ὑστερον λέγει* or *τότε εἰρηκεν* at the beginning of ver. 17, though these are plainly glosses. It is an argument, too, of some force in support of this arrangement, that a number of clauses are omitted by the apostle from the passage as it stands in

Jeremiah, and their place is between what is here exhibited in the 16th verse and what is in the 17th; so that the whole of the 16th may very naturally be designated what was spoken before. Still it cannot but appear strange, that the apostle, who so carefully marks the apodosis in the quotation at ver. 9, as compared with ver. 8, should have altogether omitted here to indicate the contrast which *προειρηκέναι* leads you to expect. It has therefore been supposed by many, such as Luther, Calvin, Bengel, Storr, Böhme, Knapp, De Wette, that the words *λέγει Κύριος*, though forming part of the passage as it stands in Jeremiah, were yet designed by the apostle to form the connecting link between the beginning and the end of his own sentence. A similar freedom with the language of quotations you find in ver. 7 of this chapter, where *τοῦ ποιῆσαι* is placed under the government of *ἤκω*, instead of 'being connected with what follows, as in the original, and in iii. 9, where *τεσσαράκοντα ἔτη* are transferred in the same manner. According to this view, all the words following *λέγει Κύριος* are to be understood as cited by the apostle to illustrate and support his conclusion. And if it be said that those of them which are contained in ver. 16, *διδούς νόμους, κ.τ.λ.*, do not at all refer to the subject, but only those in ver. 17, *καὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν, κ.τ.λ.*, it is perhaps a sufficient answer to say, that in ix. 14 the apostle has taken care to represent complete pardon and faithful service of God as inseparably connected together; and that is just what is done in these two clauses. Having the law written upon the heart and mind means, being thoroughly impregnated with its spirit, and altogether under its influence.

The general import of the passage quoted has already been considered at chap. viii. 8. It is only necessary here to remark, that the two quotations vary somewhat from one another. Brevity being studied the second time, the apostle not only leaves out several clauses, but he substitutes *πρὸς αὐτοὺς* in the room of *τῷ ὄκκῳ Ἰσραήλ*. More frequently *διατίθεσθαι* is construed with the dative of a person; but it is also to be found with *πρός*, as in Ex. xxiv. 8 and elsewhere, in the very same sense. Of course the meaning here is the same, the one expression being just substituted for the other. Perhaps the apostle might prefer the word *αὐτούς*, as a means of indicating

that he understood the prophet to mean, not the house of Israel literally and nationally, but rather the spiritual Israel, as embracing others besides Jews. *Αὐτοὶ* is not unfrequently used without any preceding noun to which it relates, as in Heb. iv. 8, Matt. xi. 1, xii. 9, Rom. x. 1, the reader being left to gather its reference from the general strain of the passage; and of course a reader of the Epistle to the Hebrews would understand it here of Christians generally, whether they were Jews or Gentiles. It is not easy to see why the apostle, having quoted the passage exactly at chap. viii. 8, according to the Septuagint (Jer. xxxviii. 32), here transposes *καρδίας* and *διανοιῶν*, and somewhat alters their government. The substantial meaning remains unaffected; and therefore the common idea probably is correct, that the verbal variations are the consequence of the quotation's having been made the second time from memory.

Ver. 18. This verse contains the apostle's brief and pointed comment upon the passage cited from Jeremiah. Let there once be forgiveness of sin, and then there is no more need of sin-offering. The conclusion is undeniable. The remission of sins foretold by the prophet was of a different kind from any remission that had ever been known under the old economy. It was a blessing first to come into existence under the new covenant. In the sacrifices of bulls and goats there was a remembrance again made of sins every year; "but after those days," says Jeremiah, "their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Something was then to be done that would make complete and perpetual expiation of human guilt, so that, when pardoned, it should no more be remembered. After that time, therefore, there could never again be need of anything in the shape of a sin-offering. How shamelessly the Romanists place themselves in conflict with Scripture, when they describe the mass as a real sacrifice and oblation, words are not needed to prove. The contradiction is palpable to the eye of a child. No wonder they are hostile to the unrestricted reading of God's word. Popery, and the Bible read in every household, could not long co-exist.

The argumentative part of the Epistle to the Hebrews closes at chap. x. 18. From this point onwards to the end of the book

you find practical admonitions and warnings, grounded upon the principles already laid down. In vers. 19-25 you have the leading admonition, and what follows stands to this in the relation of motives and considerations. Vers. 19-21 lay hold of what precedes, and repeat the substance of it. *Οὖν* does not refer merely to the foregoing section, but to the whole at least of chap. ix., or perhaps even to all that is said about priesthood from chap. iv. 14 onwards. Christ has been described as a great High Priest; He has offered a sacrifice immeasurably superior in value to all the sacrifices of the old law, and He has thus thrown open to His people the holiest of all, that had remained shut for ages (ix. 8). Ver. 19, therefore, exhibits the feeling which we are now permitted to cherish in reference to the heavenly sanctuary. *Παῤῥησίαν* does not mean, as Ernesti and Stuart suppose, liberty or permission granted; but it describes subjectively the boldness and confidence which the parties themselves have, grounded upon what has been done for them. Erasmus and Heinrichs understand *εἰσοδον* to refer to Christ's own entrance into the heavenly world, as if the meaning were, "having confidence in the entrance made by Jesus with His own blood." But to express this idea, *Ἰησοῦ* would have required to be placed immediately after *εἰσοδον*. It is boldness with regard to entering ourselves that is meant. Whether is the apostle here speaking of the confident expectation of entering into heaven when we die, or of confidence to enter into the presence of God in prayer while we are alive upon earth? This latter idea seems to be the correct one; for the passage before us is perfectly analogous, both in structure and substance, to chap. iv. 14-16, where there can be no doubt that it is "approaches to a throne of grace" that are spoken of. The same view is supported by the conclusion drawn in ver. 22, *προσερχώμεθα*—let us therefore approach. Approach to what? If *εἰσοδον τῶν ἁγίων* means entrance here on earth into God's gracious presence, then *προσερχώμεθα* is sufficiently definite, and means approach to God in religious duties; but if *εἰσοδον* refers to an actual entrance into heaven at last, then, as *προσερχώμεθα* unquestionably means something to be done upon earth, it was indispensable that something should be added to make the sense complete. The total want of anything to define the

object of *προσερχώμεθα*, makes it plain that *εἰσοδὸν τῶν ἁγίων* means the entrance here on earth to a throne of grace. Storr, Schulz, Böhme, and Bleek, connect the words *ἐν τῷ αἵματι Ἰησοῦ* immediately with *εἰσοδὸν τῶν ἁγίων*, and view them as analogous to *ἐν αἵματι ἀλλοτρίῳ* in ix. 25, as if the meaning were, that worshippers enter into God's presence with the blood of Christ, as the high priest of old did with the blood of bulls and goats. But this idea would make all worshippers real priests. The meaning is, not that we enter into God's presence, carrying Christ's blood to offer it, but that, washed in the blood of Christ, we approach to God with acceptance, or that by means of the blood of Christ we have boldness to draw near to the throne of grace. Sacrifices of bulls and goats never made real expiation. God was not rendered propitious by them. They could not allay the inquietudes of an accusing conscience. They could not fill the bosom with a sense of God's paternal love, and impart the conviction that sin was blotted out for ever. But Christ's sacrifice, as it has given infinite and eternal satisfaction to God, so is it fitted to inspire the soul of the believer with perfect confidence. He sees that nothing more is needed to ensure his everlasting acceptance. He has no doubt as to the perfect sufficiency of Christ's atoning work. With confidence, therefore, he trusts to it, and with the boldness of undoubting faith he treads the entrance into the sanctuary of God's presence. He can address the offended Sovereign of the universe as his reconciled Father and Friend. He has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ver. 20. *Ἦν* may either be understood as referring to *εἰσοδὸν* or to *ὁδόν*, perhaps rather to the former, *ὁδόν* following in apposition. *Εἰσοδὸν* does not mean the act of entering, but the way of entering, the entrance. This way or entrance Christ hath dedicated or consecrated for us,—that is, says Chrysostom, prepared: *τουτέστιν ἦν κατεσκεύασεν, καὶ ἥς ἤρξατο ἐγκαινισμὸς γὰρ λέγεται ἀρχὴ χρήσεως λοιπὸν ἦν κατεσκεύασε, φησί, καὶ δ' ἥς αὐτὸς ἐβάδισεν* (vol. xii. 258, D). *Ἐγκαινίζω* literally signifies to make new, to construct something at first; and then in the Septuagint to dedicate, to set apart to a sacred use. Christ is described as the forerunner, *πρόδρομος* (vi. 19, 20), who hath entered for us within the veil, and thus He hath made a way

by which we are to follow Him, at present in the exercise of faith, but hereafter by a bodily entrance along with Him. This way is styled *πρόσφατον*, new. It was first opened up by Christ, for under the old covenant the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest. Some have imagined, as McLean (ii. 94), that because Christ denominates Himself the way (John xiv. 6), the epithets *πρόσφατον* and *ζῶσαν* have been chosen by the apostle as descriptive of Him personally, "newly slain and living." But this idea confounds the literal with the tropical use of language. *Πρόσφατον* does mean, according to its etymology, newly slain, but it is also currently employed to denote new or fresh, where slaughter is out of the question; and as applied to a way, it can only have this signification. Here it is selected with singular propriety, for it is not exactly newness as opposed to oldness which it indicates, but freshness as opposed to decay. It is not new merely as coming in the room of something which has gone before it; but it is fresh, as having an intrinsic excellence and vigour and stability in itself. And this quality shall always characterize it. It will become old in the sense of having existed for many centuries, but it will never become old in the sense of exhibiting symptoms of decay. "Nunquam veterascit," says J. Capellus, "nunquam languescit sanguinis a Christo pro nobis effusi virtus" (*Critici Sacri*, vol. vii. 1486). Of similar import is the epithet *ζῶσαν*. Theophylact explains it as meaning *ζωοποιούσα, εἰς ζωὴν ἄγουσα*, life-giving; but this is certainly more than the simple word can be understood as expressing. The phrase *ἐλπὶς ζωῆς* in 1 Pet. i. 3 has been appealed to, but there is no greater evidence of this signification in the one passage than in the other. Tholuck conceives that *ζῶσαν* is used by the apostle, because the way spoken of goes through a living offering; but this view confounds the qualities of a person with the qualities of a way, and on the same ground *πρόσφατον* might be rendered "newly killed." Ernesti, Schulz, and Bleek understand the word tropically in the sense of perpetual, on the ground that what lives continues. A pond dries up, but a living stream flows on. This is the view given by Chrysostom, *ζῶσαν αὐτὴν ἐκάλεισεν, τὴν μένουσαν οὕτω δηλῶν* (xii. 258, A). According to this interpretation no violence is done to the word, and con-

sistency is preserved between the two epithets, the one expressing what is a consequence of the other. You maintain a contrast, too, with the way under the old dispensation which decayed and was abolished; whereas, if you understand *πρόσφατον* as meaning bloody, and *ζῶσαν* going through a living offering, it becomes a question whether the same things might not be affirmed of access to God under the Jewish law. You could only enter the tabernacle with victims newly slain; you could only approach to God by means of the offering of living creatures. Another view of the import of *ζῶσαν*, which has also the merit of preserving a proper contrast between the old economy and the new, has been suggested by Ebrard, viz. that as you entered the Jewish tabernacle over a pavement of stones and dead earth, so now you enter into the presence of God in the exercise of vital and spiritual principles. But it is certainly very unlikely that the epithet *ζῶσαν* was suggested to the apostle by the remembrance of what the approach to the tabernacle was paved with. The exposition already given is much preferable to this.

There is considerable difficulty connected with the last clause of this verse. Doubtless *καταπεράσματος* refers to the veil through which the Jewish high priest passed when he entered into the most holy place. This veil was never opened or turned aside for the Jews in general, but the corresponding veil of heaven has been removed for all mankind. Free access has been opened up for us into God's immediate presence; and it was to make proclamation of this great fact, that at the time of Christ's death the veil of the temple was miraculously rent in twain from the top to the bottom (Matt. xxvii. 51). When the way into the true holy place was laid open, then the veil of the earthly sanctuary was disparted without human hands. And it can scarcely be doubted that the words before us contain an allusion to this striking coincidence. But how are we to conceive of the relation between the veil of the temple and the body of Christ? It can hardly be said that the veil was in all respects a type of Christ's flesh; for the use of the veil was to shut men out from the sanctuary, but the use of Christ's body was not to shut them out from heaven. The veil would seem naturally fitted to be a type of what obstructed approach to God;

but Christ's flesh, so far from being an obstruction, was that which removed all obstruction out of the way. Some say *καταπέτασμα* is applied to Christ's body, as being the veil, or covering, or temple, within which or behind which His divinity is concealed; but this idea has little to recommend it. It renders indistinct and confused the allusion to the veil of the temple; and what is pertinent to the apostle's object is not an exhibition of what His human body is to His divine nature, but an exhibition of what He does to secure admission into God's presence and favour. Stuart supposes *διὰ* may have different senses as governing *καταπετάσματος* and as governing *σαρκός*,—in the one case "through," and in the other "by means of;" but this idea does not at all remove the difficulties of the passage. Perhaps the simplest view of the subject is that proposed by Capellus, that the veil of the temple was a type of Christ's human nature, but only in one single respect; not in so far as it debarred entrance, but only in so far as it afforded entrance into the holy of holies. The high priest found access through the veil into the immediate presence of God; and so a way into the holiest of all has been opened up through the body of Christ. The veil of the temple was rent in twain, and thus the mercy-seat was disclosed to view; and so the body of Christ was torn and broken, and thus the throne on high was made accessible to man.

Ver. 21. This verse falls under the government of *ἔχοντες*, like what precedes, and exhibits a second blessing or privilege possessed by believers. Stuart, Tholuck, and others, suppose that *ἱεὶς μέγαν* denotes simply high priest, because this is the phrase almost always employed in the Septuagint to represent כהן גדול. The usage, however, of our epistle is quite different, *ἀρχιερεὺς* being the word employed for high priest; and in the only other passage where *μέγας* occurs in such a connection, it is actually associated with *ἀρχιερεὺς* (chap. iv. 14). Without a doubt, therefore, *μέγαν* here means exalted, elevated, mighty. The idea is not merely that Christ corresponds to the Jewish high priest rather than to the common priests; but that He is the one great and glorious Priest, who unites in Himself all of priesthood that now exists. This priest is described as being over the house of God. The same terms occur at chap. iii. 2-6.

There seems, however, to be a slight difference in their meaning in the two passages. Here they signify not household or family, as in chap. iii. 6, but sanctuary or dwelling-place, the presence-chamber of God, into which access has been opened up for believers by the blood of Christ. We have both a sanctuary graciously thrown open for our admission, and a glorious Priest presiding over it to present our prayers, and supplications, and thanksgivings unto God. A sanctuary without a priest would not suffice, and a priest must have a sanctuary to minister in.

Ver. 22. Here commences the conclusion of this long and complex period. Having such privileges—*προσερχώμεθα*—let us draw near, viz. to the place spoken of, to the sanctuary thrown open for our admission—to God, who now sits upon a throne of grace. This word is frequently used in our epistle to describe approaches to God in acts of worship (chap. x. 1, vii. 25, xi. 6), and it must be viewed as including every religious service which we perform in obedience to the divine will. The features of acceptable worship are also mentioned by the apostle. We must draw near *μετ' ἀληθινῆς καρδίας*, with a true heart. Our adorations and prayers must be offered, not in hypocrisy, but in godly sincerity. We must worship God in spirit and in truth. All mere formalism is condemned by this clause, all trust in outward rites, all idea that sacraments and ordinances can benefit us otherwise than as observed with hearts sincere and contrite. Sincerity, indeed, in a wrong system will not save us; but equally the right religion without sincerity will prove unavailing to our deliverance. We must have a true, upright, honest heart in serving God. *Πληροφορία πίστεως*, full assurance of faith, does not mean, what the English terms are often employed to denote, perfect assurance of one's own interest in Christ; but it means thorough conviction of the truth of what is revealed in Scripture, the absence of all disposition to doubt or question the doctrines of the gospel. The doctrines more particularly referred to here are those which the apostle has been handling, viz. the efficacy of Christ's blood as a propitiation for sin, and the forgiveness of sin grounded thereon. We must draw near to God with perfect confidence in our Lord's sacrifice and intercession as a priest. *Πληροφορία* means literally a full burden or measure; and, coupled with *πίστεως*, it is well

fitted to express the idea of unwavering conviction, complete fulness of belief. Where doubts are entertained of Christ's ability to save, where it is imagined that something else besides His blood is needed to procure pardon, there cannot be an entire surrender of the soul to God, but there will always be some hazard of apostasy. The stronger your faith is, the more certainly and fully will you enjoy the benefit of the truths you believe. The necessity of a firm and sound faith is not connected with religion only: it is equally great in every walk of life; and according to a man's faith, so does it always happen to him. One mariner believes the information that is given to him regarding certain rocks and quicksands, and the usual direction of certain winds; and steering his course accordingly, he escapes danger, and makes a prosperous voyage: but another, disregarding the information, sails in what he thinks a better course, and his ship is dashed to pieces upon the rocks. A true and firm faith is always salutary; an unsound and wavering belief can hardly fail to be productive of mischief.

As the first clause of this verse describes the feelings with which every approach to God ought to be made, so the last brings into view the state out of which all acceptable worship must spring. Though placed last, it is really first in the order of thought, as is plain from the tense of *ἐρραντισμένοι*, having been sprinkled, as persons who have been sprinkled. The very first step in religion is to obtain pardon through faith in Christ; and then, as pardoned men, we are to make continual approaches to God in worship. The sentiment here exhibited is the same as in Rom. v. 1: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith (*προσαγωγήν τῇ πίστει*) into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." It is generally allowed that in *ἐρραντισμένοι* there is an allusion to the ancient practice, already mentioned in chap. ix. 21, of sprinkling the blood of sacrificial offerings upon the Israelites (Num. xix. 18). So we, believing in Christ, have His blood sprinkled upon our hearts; and the consequence is, that we are purged from dead works. *Ἐρραντισμένοι ἀπὸ* is a *constructio prægans*; it means sprinkled, and thus cleansed from. An evil conscience means not an accusing and troublesome conscience,

but a wicked and defiled conscience,—the consciousness of being guilty sinners, the consciousness of being chargeable with dead works. Purgation from these being described as the effect of sprinkling with blood, it is of course plain that not sanctification, but justification, is meant. The sins of believers are pardoned through faith, they are justified before God, and can approach with acceptance into His presence.

It has been much controverted whether the next clause stands in connection with this, as dependent along with it upon *προσερχώμεθα*, or whether it introduces a new member, and is to be viewed as connected with *κατέχωμεν*. According to either connection the passage makes good sense, but the latter view seems preferable. The sentence flows more smoothly when *κατέχωμεν* is connected with *προσερχώμεθα* by *καὶ* standing before *λελουμένοι*. Nor is it any objection to this arrangement that the participial clause is placed after the leading verb in the one member, and before it in the other; for it is common with the author of this book, where two instances of the same construction follow one another, to invert the order in which the words are placed, as in chap. iv. 16, vii. 6. But the great argument that seems to settle the question is the nature of the sentiment expressed. For if there be an allusion in *λελουμένοι* to baptism, then this clause falls most naturally into connection with *κατέχωμεν*, or the duty of holding fast a Christian profession once made. By faith we are justified and pardoned, but these are inward and invisible changes. It is by baptism that an outward profession of faith in Christ is made, and union to the church obtained. It is a most appropriate sentiment, therefore, that is expressed according to the arrangement proposed: Having been baptized, and having thereby professed our faith in Christ, let us hold fast the profession thus made. As pardoned individuals, let us serve the Lord; as baptized individuals, let us be true to our profession. It is denied indeed, by Calvin, Beza, Ernesti, Limborch, and others, that there is any allusion here to baptism at all. They suppose the sole reference to be to the washings practised under the law, and make inward sanctification the thing that is really meant, of which the outward application of water is only an emblem, as in Ezek. xxxvi. 25. But sanctification is not, like justifica-

tion, a condition of acceptable worship; it is rather the result to be developed after acceptable worship has begun. Besides, the contrast between *καρδίας* and *σῶμα* shows that the latter is not to be understood figuratively. The blood of the old sacrifices was as much sprinkled upon the body as the water of the old washings. When, therefore, the apostle speaks of blood sprinkled upon the heart, he must be understood figuratively; but when he speaks of water applied to the body, he must be understood literally. Ebrard's argument for a metaphorical signification of *σῶμα* dislocates the whole construction. It supposes *καὶ λελουμένοι* to be a new commencement, standing upon a level with *ἔχοντες οὖν*; but vers. 19-21 are plainly the protasis of the sentence, and vers. 22-25 are the apodosis; and *λελουμένοι*, *κ.τ.λ.*, and *ἐρραντισμένοι*, *κ.τ.λ.*, are clauses similarly related to the apodosis. Their meaning therefore will be best determined by comparison with one another; and as *καρδίας* plainly refers to the inner region of the soul, *σῶμα* must be viewed as bringing the body particularly under notice. Theodoret even affirms that not only *λελουμένοι σῶμα*, but also *ἐρραντισμένοι καρδίας*, refers to baptism,—the one describing the outward rite, and the other exhibiting the spiritual significance of it. But though, doubtless, it is the cleansing of the soul from sin that is the spiritual import of baptism, yet *ἐρραντισμένοι καρδίας* is rather to be viewed as describing inward purgation, in terms that allude to the sprinkling of blood under the old covenant (Ex. xxix. 21; Lev. viii. 30). Anciently there were sprinklings of the body with blood, and there were also washings of the body with water (Ex. xxix. 4; Lev. xvi. 4, xvii. 15, 16), both symbolical of the cleansing of the soul from the guilt of sin. The sprinkling of blood survives now only figuratively in the application of Christ's blood to the conscience; but the application of water to the body still continues to be actually made in the ordinance of baptism. This ordinance, the only surviving remnant of ancient sprinklings and washings, still points to what they all foreshadowed, viz. the removal of guilt from the conscience. Of itself, however, it no more purifies from guilt than the ancient sprinklings and washings did. It is only as observed in faith that it is attended with any beneficial consequences. It is but an outward sign, and the

inward spiritual blessing is enjoyed through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The water mentioned is described by the apostle as pure. This epithet is regarded by Boehme, not as referring to the physical cleanness of the water, but to the fact of its being set apart to a sacred use; and the phrase מים קדשים, holy water, in Num. v. 17, rendered by the LXX. ὕδωρ καθαρόν, is adduced as a proof. But it is equally true that מים טהורים, pure water, in Ezek. xxxvi. 25, is rendered by the same translators ὕδωρ καθαρόν. As all the other words in the clause before us are employed in their literal signification, there is no reason why καθαρῶ should not be understood in the same manner. In a case like this it is not the separate words that are to be viewed as tropical, but it is the whole act that is to receive a symbolical meaning. Literal water is used in baptism, and this water ought to be physically pure. Only such water is fitted to cleanse the body from defilement, and only the administration of baptism with such water is fitted to give a vivid representation of the cleansing efficacy of the gospel. What idea could water from a filthy puddle suggest of internal purity?

Connected with the reference to baptism in λελουμένοι, κ.τ.λ., is the enforcement of the duty of steadfastness: κατέχωμεν τὴν ὁμολογίαν τῆς ἐλπίδος ἀκλινῇ—let us hold the confession of hope unwavering. The same exhortation has already been given at chap. iii. 6, 14, iv. 14. The parties to whom it was addressed were exposed to many and great temptations, both from Gentiles and from their own countrymen the Jews; and therefore it was requisite, that by a variety of considerations they should be encouraged and stimulated to watchfulness and perseverance. God permits His people to be tried by dangers and difficulties, that the effort indispensable to overcome them may strengthen their principles and confirm their character. Ὁμολογίαν denotes agreement, assent, confession. It is not here to be understood objectively of Christianity as a system, but subjectively of the confession made by parties who embrace it: see at chap. iii. 1. Having named the name of Christ, we are to continue doing so. Our translators have read πίστεως instead of ἐλπίδος, following the evidence of one or two MSS., but there can be no doubt that ἐλπίδος is the

true treading. The sense, however, in either case is substantially the same; for faith is the substance of things hoped for, and hope must always be grounded upon faith. The hope spoken of is the hope which the gospel permits us to cherish,—a hope founded upon the promises of God. The profession of Christianity is equivalent to the avowal that we entertain this hope; and having laid hold of it, we have every reason to hold it fast, for faithful is He that promised. God the Father is here meant, of whom the apostle has already declared (chap. vi. 13) that He gave promises to Abraham, and confirmed them with an oath; and the very words which are used in the verse before us are employed also in chap. xi. 11 to describe the confidence of Sarah in God's promise that she should have a son. She counted Him faithful that promised. All the promises of God are yea and amen in Christ Jesus, and they may be relied upon with perfect confidence. Therefore the apostle adds the word *ἀκλινῇ*, unbending, not turning from side to side. Our confession should be a firm, unalterable confession. It has a foundation to rest upon that is absolutely immoveable. The rock of ages can never be shaken. We dishonour this foundation, therefore, when we build upon it a vacillating hope. Our confession of hope ought to be a confession that endures, without wavering, through all trials and difficulties.

Vers. 24–27. The apodosis of the long period commencing at ver. 19 consists of three parts: *προσερχώμεθα*, “let us approach;” *κατέχωμεν*, “let us hold fast;” *καὶ κατανοῶμεν*, “and let us observe.” We must worship, we must persevere, and we must take an interest in one another. *Κατανοέω* denotes to perceive, to observe, to consider. Here it describes the friendly observation which it is incumbent upon Christians to exercise over one another, and it expresses very nearly the same idea as *ἐπισκοποῦντες* in xii. 15. There is, indeed, a prying and censorious watchfulness of others, accompanied with a degree of satisfaction at their failings, which is utterly opposed to the spirit of the gospel, and stamps the individual who indulges it as an alien from the commonwealth of Israel. The observation enjoined by the apostle must spring from a brotherly interest, and its object must be mutual incitement to what is good. *Παροξυσμὸς* is commonly used in a bad sense, as in Acts xv. 39,

Deut. xxix. 28 ; and the same is the case with the verb, as in 1 Cor. xiii. 5. Here, however, the word signifies stimulation to what is good ; and the same shade of meaning is also found in connection with the verb, as in Xenoph. *Memor.* iii. 3, 13. The genitives coming after *παροξυσμὸν* are genitives of object, and denote, not that which excites, nor that which is excited, but that to which the parties spoken of are impelled. They express the same idea as either *εἰς* or *πρὸς* would have done ; but *εἰς* being used already before *παροξυσμόν*, the construction is varied. Love and good works, the objects to which we are to be impelled, stand to one another in the relation of principle and actions following. Love must pervade the bosom ; and out of love Christian conduct will spring. Good works mean all acts of obedience to the precepts of Christ's gospel, not the least of which are, in times of persecution and distress, mutual beneficence and kindness. Brotherly love will produce brotherly help. To do good and to communicate, forget not ; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased. Chrysostom, Theophylact, Michaelis, and Bleek, suppose that *κατανοῶμεν* expresses merely the idea of looking to others, for the purpose of observing the good that is in them, in order to copy it ourselves. *Ἐπισκοπῶμεν*, says Theophylact, *εἴ τις ἐνάρητος, ἵνα τοῦτον μιμώμεθα, οὐχ ἵνα φθονῶμεν, ἀλλ' ἵνα παροξυνώμεθα μᾶλλον εἰς τὸ τὰ αὐτὰ ἐκείνῳ καλὰ ἔργα ποιεῖν*. Doubtless this idea is included in the apostle's admonition, but we may notice defects in others as well as excellences ; and viewing them as rocks to be shunned, we may learn to steer our course in greater safety. And not only so ; but the apostle's words may also be fairly considered as implying, that when we notice defects in others, we are to warn them in a friendly manner, and to endeavour to prevail upon them to correct their faults. No doubt the giving of advice is a very delicate duty, and it may be so performed as altogether to defeat the object in view. Still it is a duty, although much wisdom and caution are requisite to render it productive of benefit. Mutual observation ought to be directed both to the excitement of ourselves and others to what is good, and to the correction both of their mistakes and of our own. That all this is included in the 24th verse, is plain from what follows in the 25th, where the duty of mutual admonition and warning is

exhibited in participial connection with the leading exhortation of ver. 24.

Ver. 25. This verse being participially connected with the preceding, points out the manner in which the admonition there given is to be carried out, or what is required in order to its being carried out. Church connection and intercourse are indispensable to the proper influence of Christians upon one another. Two views have prevailed regarding the meaning of *ἐγκαταλείποντες τὴν ἐπισυναγωγὴν*. Calvin, J. Capellus, Kuinæ, Bretschneider, Bleek, Seyffarth, understand *ἐπισυναγωγὴν* as meaning society or church, the whole Christian community; and the whole phrase most of them consider as embodying an admonition against apostasy, or the desertion of the body of Christ. But in the only other place of the New Testament where *ἐπισυναγωγὴ* occurs, viz. 2 Thess. ii. 1, it denotes, not a society, but a gathering together; and in 2 Macc. ii. 7, 13, 14, 18, iv. 39, it obviously bears the same signification. And this is the most suitable meaning here. The pronoun *αὐτῶν* does not at all accord with the idea, that it is the collective body of believers the apostle is speaking of. And more obviously still is this the case with the phrase *καθὼς ἔθος τισίν*; for apostasy is not a thing which can be said to be the habit of certain individuals, or a thing done frequently by them. Without a doubt, therefore, the apostle means to admonish the Hebrews against neglecting the practice of coming together at stated periods for worship. They are not to absent themselves from the meetings of God's people. This is the view taken by Theophylact: *οἶδεν, ὅτι τὸ συνέρχεσθαι ἀλλήλοις τὴν ἀγάπην γεννᾷ· διὸ παραινεῖ μὴ ἐγκαταλείπειν τὸ ἐπισυνάγεσθαι*; and also by Chrysostom and Œcumenius. Bœhme holds by "society" as the meaning of *ἐπισυναγωγὴ*, and yet he acknowledges that the clause *καθὼς ἔθος τισίν* is opposed to the idea of its being apostasy that is spoken of; and therefore he makes the admonition signify that believers are not to neglect the church in her days of suffering, when so many individuals are needing assistance. But though this view meets the argument grounded upon *ἔθος*, it leaves the others untouched. Bleek, although he agrees with Bœhme as to the meaning of *ἐπισυναγωγὴ*, yet rejects alike the idea of its being apostasy and the idea of its being the

neglect of the poor against which the apostle's warning is directed, and maintains that leaving the church means withdrawing one's self from the requirements of the church in reference to fellowship, and neglecting the meetings of the followers of the Lord. But this is just a roundabout way of reaching the very same idea, to which you come at once when you understand *ἐπισυναγωγή* in the sense of gathering together. Without a doubt, it is the practice of neglecting public worship which the apostle is condemning. Various motives might conspire to tempt individuals to absent themselves from the meetings of their fellow-Christians. Some might be influenced by the idea that they would be less exposed to the observation of their enemies, and therefore be more likely to escape persecution. Others might imagine that they did not stand greatly in need of instruction; that with the private opportunities of improvement which they possessed, they could dispense with the helps afforded in the meetings of the church. But the apostle plainly considers it to be an indispensable duty of Christians to be faithful in assembling together for Christian conference and worship of God. It is not merely for the acquisition of knowledge that we are to frequent the assemblies of Christ's people. It is for holding fellowship with one another; it is for cherishing love to one another; and, above all, it is for the purpose of presenting our united acknowledgments to God, of paying to Him the homage which is His due, and of professing His name before the world. These are ends just as obligatory upon the wise and learned as upon the simple and ignorant. And parties absenting themselves from meetings for public worship are guilty of a manifest dereliction of duty. They may not be apostates, but they place themselves in a very equivocal position; and they expose themselves to influences which in the end may lead to apostasy. And they are out of the way of those good influences that might confirm them in the love and practice of the truth. Attendance at the meetings of God's people is brought in by the apostle in connection with love and good works, and is described as a means of inciting to these Christian graces. Meeting with our brethren to worship God with united voice, we have our hearts drawn to them in love and sympathy, and we feel it to be incumbent upon us to comfort and aid them in all their distresses.

Παρακαλοῦντες stands in contrast with *ἐγκαταλείποντες*. It must be viewed as governing *ἐαυτούς*, supplied from the preceding clause. What is the object of the exhorting spoken of? Some say it is exhorting to regularity of attendance at the meetings of God's people. But this is too confined a view of the subject. The word seems rather to refer to what takes place in the assemblies of the faithful. Believers are not to neglect worship, but rather to use all means for mutual incitement to love and good works. Christians meet, and at their meetings they have the opportunity of admonishing one another. Doubtless admonitions to individuals are best given in private; but exhortations also are to be given in public touching the dangers and duties in which all are concerned.

The admonition to be faithful in attending the Christian assemblies, so as to enjoy the benefit of the exhortations there given, is enforced by a consideration of the approach of a certain time. All this is by so much the more necessary, by how much ye see the day approaching. It is the whole previous admonition, and not merely what is embraced in the participial clause, as Bleek supposes, that is enforced by the consideration of the day spoken of. And what day is meant? Most interpreters say it is the day of judgment, the day of Christ's second advent, which is often mentioned as indefinitely, as in 2 Tim. i. 12, 18, Mark xiii. 33, Luke xxi. 8, Rev. i. 3, xxii. 10. To this it may be objected, that that day was not so near as to be already apparent to the Hebrews. They knew that it was coming, and probably they supposed it was not so far away as it has turned out to be; but still they could hardly be said to see its approach. No doubt the advent of Christ and the end of the world are spoken of throughout the New Testament as near events, as events requiring to be diligently prepared for. Still we find, that when the Thessalonians inferred from such language that the coming of the Lord and the judgment of the world were to take place in their own day, Paul at once set himself to correct the mistake, and showed them in a second epistle, that certain great events, requiring some time for their evolution, were to happen before the end. "Near" is a relative term; and when it is the whole duration of the world that is your measure, you must not interpret it with too much precision. A century

of the world's history is relatively as short as a single year of a man's life. Had the apostle then said simply that the day was approaching, we could have had no difficulty in believing that he meant the day of judgment; but when he speaks of the Hebrews already seeing the approach of the day, observing the symptoms of its arrival, it is more difficult to imagine how this could be said with anything like propriety. Was there then any other day that really was near, and of whose approach tokens might be observed at the time? Yes, there was the day of Jerusalem's overthrow; and we know that such a calamity was often designated by the prophets the day of the Lord, as in Joel, who so describes (Joel ii. 1) the miseries inflicted upon the Jews by an army from the north. Now our Lord Himself had plainly foretold the destruction of Jerusalem; He had pointed out the parties who were to accomplish it; He had specified the tokens of its approach; He had declared it was to happen before the existing generation passed away; and He had given instructions to His disciples how they might avoid the calamities connected with it. The believing Hebrews, therefore, could not but see the approach of this day of trouble; and as it was a judgment inflicted for the rejection of God's overtures of mercy, nothing could be more suitable as a motive to enforce perseverance and fidelity in the service of God. According to this view, also, the extreme indefiniteness of the language is easily explained. If it was the day of Jerusalem's overthrow that was meant, then it was indispensable that the language should be somewhat enigmatical, as otherwise the fury of the unbelieving Jews might have been excited against the Christians; but if the day of judgment was meant, there was no reason why a somewhat fuller expression than "the day" might not have been employed. Should any, however, prefer to consider the day of judgment as what is meant, then they must conceive the apostle to represent the Hebrews as seeing the events which are described in Matt. xxiv. as signs of the coming of the Son of man. These events were predicted in connection with the coming of Christ; and happening under the eye of the Hebrews, they became pledges of the certainty of the Saviour's own arrival in due time.

Ver. 26. The three preceding verses do not treat expressly of apostasy, but they suggest the idea of it. They admonish us

to hold fast the profession of Christian hope, to stir one another up to love and good works, and to be faithful in observing all the appointed ordinances of religion. Neglect in any of these respects may be followed by very disastrous consequences. Love waxing cold, the cause of the gospel may be abandoned altogether. The dreadful wretchedness of such a state, therefore, the apostle proceeds to point out, with the view of exciting a salutary dread in the minds of the Hebrews, and leading them to assiduity in the discharge of all religious duties.

Ἀμαρτανόντων does not refer to sin in general, but to the specific sin of apostasy from the faith of the gospel. There lives not a Christian who is not painfully sensible that daily does he break God's law in thought, in word, and in deed. But the sin here meant is not the violation of single precepts of Scripture, but the total relinquishment of the whole Christian system, what is styled in chap. iii. 12 departing from the living God, and in chap. vi. 6 falling away. It has been well observed by Œcumenius and Theophylact, that the present tense of the participle marks persistency in the sin spoken of, continuance in it without repentance: *οὐκ εἶπεν ἀμαρτόντων, ἀλλ' ἀμαρτανόντων, τουτέστιν ἐπιμενόντων τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ ἀμετανοήτως* (Theoph.). And this final abandonment of the gospel is described as taking place with the full consent of the will. *Ἐκουσως* is emphatic. All sin implies some exercise of will. Where there is absolutely no will, there can be no sin. It is only in so far as we voluntarily yield to temptation, that we are at any time chargeable with guilt. But here the apostle seems to use the word *ἐκουσως* agreeably to the distinction laid down in the Pentateuch between sins of inadvertency (*שְׁגָגָה*, *ἀκουσίως ἀμαρτάνειν*, Sept., Lev. iv. 2, xxvii. 5, Num. xv. 29) and sins of presumption (*חַטָּאת*, *ἐν χειρὶ ὑπερηφανίας*, Num. xv. 30). All sins are voluntary, but some are committed with but little reflection, and scarcely a perception of their evil character; whilst others are perpetrated deliberately, against the clear light of conscience, and with a distinct perception at the moment of the holiness of the law which they violate. Every sin of this kind is not apostasy, but apostasy is pre-eminently a sin of this kind. Other deliberate sins are wilful violations of some particular precept of Christianity; apostasy is a wilful abandonment of the whole

system. And just in proportion to the elevation of attainments and experience that may have been reached, is the subsequent fall the greater, and the ruin the more terrible. Peirce and Bretschneider suppose that *ἐκουσίως* stands opposed to a denial of Christ extorted from the lips by the pressure of persecution ; but this is too narrow a view of the subject. Doubtless such a denial of Christ could hardly be designated the wilful sinning that is here spoken of ; but equally there are multitudes of other sins which you are not warranted to stigmatize with this name. Sinning wilfully is here opposed both as a state to individual acts, and as a wilful thing to what is done inadvertently through sudden temptation. Apostasy is a deliberate continuous abandonment of the gospel, whether taking place in times of persecution or not. No doubt it is voluntary as opposed to compulsory, but it is also further deliberate as opposed to inadvertent. It is a step taken against one's better judgment and experience.

Apostasy necessarily implies some previous knowledge of the truth. Wherefore the apostle adds : *μετὰ τὸ λαβεῖν τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τῆς ἀληθείας*. What precise amount of knowledge this indicates it is not easy to say. Undoubtedly there must be supposed to exist a tolerably clear perception of the gospel scheme of mercy ; and not only a theoretical apprehension of its truths, but also some practical feeling of their importance, and beauty, and suitableness. Our Lord, in the parable of the sower, makes mention of parties who hear the word, and anon with joy receive it, and appear for a time to be all that could be desired, though in the end they fall away completely. A fuller description of the state and attainments of apostates is given at chap. vi. 4, 5, where they are represented as having been enlightened, and made sharers of the heavenly gift, and partakers of the Holy Ghost, and of the good word of God. Doubtless all that is mentioned there must be viewed as included here under the knowledge of the truth.

With regard to the parties spoken of, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. The Jewish sacrifices have been shown to be altogether unavailing, and they are abolished. Christ's sacrifice is the one and only effective expiation, and it is never to be repeated. But apostates put away this sacrifice from themselves, and therefore they are left without hope. They

cannot be saved, because they despise the one and only means of salvation. But the question may be proposed, whether, on the supposition of their becoming convinced of the folly of their conduct, and desiring again to lay hold of Christ, they would be rejected by God, and left to perish. This supposition, however, is opposed to the hypothesis assumed in the verse; for the parties spoken of have made their choice with the full bent and determination of their minds. They have sinned wilfully, with a high hand, in a spirit of proud defiance. Doubtless, if they were truly to call upon Christ, if from the heart they were to forsake their sins, if they were to cast themselves with penitent soul upon the mercy of God, they would be accepted, and pardoned, and saved; but they will not do this. In chap. vi. 4, 5, the apostle says it is impossible to renew them to repentance. If they repented, they should still be saved; but their wills are so obstinately fixed on evil, that repentance has become to them morally impossible. No sin, however great, if it be repented of, excludes from pardon. And this shows the error of the Novatians, who employed this passage to prove that lapsed persons ought never to be re-admitted into the church, however earnestly they might desire, and however strong might be their professions of sorrow for their past misconduct. But if they really desired restoration, and were truly penitent, then they were not the parties spoken of by the apostle at all.

Ver. 27. This verse describes what does remain for apostate sinners, both subjectively and objectively. Subjectively there remaineth for them *φοβερά τις ἐκδοχή κρίσεως*. J. Capellus supposes that, though *φοβερά* is connected with *ἐκδοχή*, yet really it is designed to qualify *κρίσεως*. There is no reason, however, for disturbing the actual connection of the words. The apostle's idea is, that the apostate and obstinate sinner, even while greedily pursuing his sins, cannot efface his former knowledge from his mind, nor prevent the anticipation of a future judgment from occasionally starting up within him. And such an anticipation must of course always be coupled with fear and dismay. He may frequently succeed in banishing it from his mind, but sooner or later it will again return to appal his soul. And though in this world he may be able to engage his thoughts with other things, and thus enjoy a delu-

sive dream of pleasure; yet, when he enters into the world of spirits, he shall have a period of terrible expectation between death and the final judgment. The devils, we are told, are reserved, under chains of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day; and the impenitent also, after leaving this world, must be in a similar position. *Τίς* appended to adjectives of quality and quantity augments their force, so that *φοβερά τις* means a truly terrible expectation (Winer, § 25, 2).

Objectively, there remains for apostates *πυρὸς ζήλος ἐσθίειν μέλλοντος τοὺς ὑπεναντίους*. This is the actual punishment that is to overtake the wicked in the day of judgment. Generally, *ζήλος* is employed to designate the zeal or eagerness of an intelligent being, and frequently *πῦρ* is so construed with it as to designate the intensity of the zeal, as in Zeph. i. 18, *ἐν πυρὶ ζήλου αὐτοῦ καταναλωθήσεται πᾶσα ἡ γῆ*. See also Deut. iv. 24; Ps. lxxix. 5. It has therefore been commonly supposed, that, in the verse before us, *ζήλος* expresses the leading idea, God's indignation; while *πυρὸς* performs the office of an adjective in qualifying it—fiery indignation, fierce wrath of God. But the whole construction of the clause undoubtedly requires that *πυρὸς* should be made the leading thought, and that *ζήλος* should be viewed as indicating a quality of this fire, fierceness of flame, intensity of burning. Conclusive evidence in defence of this view is furnished by the fact that *μέλλοντος* is made to agree with *πυρὸς*, and not with *ζήλος*. It is not the *ζήλος* that is directly spoken of as about to devour, but it is the *πῦρ*. Accordingly, Chrysostom thus expounds the clause: *Καθάπερ γὰρ θηρίον παροξυνόμενον καὶ σφύδρα χαλεπαίνειν καὶ ἐξηγριωμένον οὐκ ἂν παύσαιοτο, ἕως ἂν λάβοι τινὰ καὶ καταφάγοι· οὕτω καὶ τὸ πῦρ ἐκεῖνο, καθάπερ τις ὑπὸ ζήλου κεντούμενος ὧν ἂν ἐπιλάβηται οὐκ ἀφίησιν ἀλλὰ τρώγει καὶ διασπᾷ* (Chrys. xii. 267, B). Doubtless, the fire spoken of by the apostle is the fire of hell; and the adversaries whom it is to devour are those who have rejected and despised the gospel of Christ. In 2 Thess. i. 8 we are told that the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Is *ὑπεναντίους* to be understood as a specific designation of apostates? No. It is apostates only of whom the apostle is speaking in

the passage as a whole, and apostates certainly are the most inveterate adversaries of God; but they are not the only parties who are to be visited with punishment at last. The fire of the final judgment shall seize not only them, but also all unbelievers, whether they have once professed the truth, and then abandoned it, or whether they have never professed obedience to Christ at all. *ῥησάμενους* denotes here all who are to be punished as adversaries of God. Boehme draws attention to the circumstance that *ἐσθίειν*, and not *κατεσθίειν*, is the word used by the apostle. The latter might have suggested the idea of completely devouring, so as to destroy and annihilate; but the former simply means to eat, not to eat up, what is fed upon. All that is said in Scripture about the punishment of the wicked implies the continuance of their being. Their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Vers. 28–34. The illustrations of this epistle are for the most part borrowed from the Mosaic institutions. Already in chap. ii. 2, and afterwards in chap. xii. 25, the apostle brings into view the punishment inflicted upon transgressors of the old law, and draws the conclusion that severer punishment awaits the despisers of the gospel. The new dispensation is a system of higher light and privilege, and disregard of it therefore involves a vastly greater amount of guilt. The same method of reasoning from the less to the greater is exhibited in the two verses that follow.

Ver. 28. *Ἀθετήσας τὸν νόμον*, any one despising Moses' law. Clearly the apostle does not here speak of a person who is guilty of some single offence, of which death is the appointed punishment. Various such offences and transgressions there were, such as profanation of the Sabbath, eating of blood, cursing of parents, adultery. But in the verse before us *ἀθετήσας* must be understood as describing a rejection of the whole Mosaic system, a wilful desertion of the worship of Jehovah. The case referred to by the apostle is plainly the one described in Deut. xvii. 2–7, where it is enacted that, if any man or woman hath transgressed God's covenant, and hath worshipped the sun or the moon, or any of the host of heaven, that person shall be stoned to death at the mouth of two or three witnesses. The very language of the Old Testament is

borrowed by the apostle. Now the case in Deuteronomy exactly corresponds to what we have represented as the meaning of the apostle in the preceding verses, and it furnishes a corroboration of the interpretation thus given. *Ἀθετήσας τὸν νόμον*, disregarding the law, means the same as *παρελθεῖν τὴν διαθήκην*, transgressing the covenant, in the Septuagint version of Deuteronomy. And for such an offence there was no mercy. No provision whatever was made for the deliverance of the wretched apostate. *Ἐπὶ δυσὶν* is the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew *עַל שְׁנֵי*; and of course it signifies, at the mouth of, on the evidence of, two or three witnesses. Considered simply as Greek, it seems to be grounded upon that use of *ἐπὶ* with the dative which expresses a condition: on the condition of there being two or three witnesses.

Ver. 29. Now, as death was the punishment inflicted upon the despisers of Moses' law, the highest possible punishment in this world, the apostle refers it to the judgment of the Hebrews themselves, what is to be expected in the case of those who similarly treat the higher and nobler dispensation of the gospel. It must be apparent to every one that they merit a far severer punishment. The apostle, however, does not enjoin the infliction of any punishment in this world, as Moses did. He can only, therefore, be viewed as referring to that punishment which God Himself shall inflict in the future world. *Πόσῳ, δοκέετε, χείρονος ἀξιωθήσεται τιμωρίας*. Apostates from the gospel shall be miserably destroyed. An intense fire shall devour them. They shall not be stoned with stones, but God Himself shall rain down upon them from heaven fire and brimstone, an horrible tempest. Their doom shall be something more appalling than that of the common impenitent in the place of woe.

In order to justify the tremendous punishment of the apostate, which, although not described, is yet hinted at in a very impressive manner, the apostle illustrates in several particulars the awful wickedness of his conduct. He is not a sinner who has never heard the gospel. He has been made acquainted with the claims of Christ, and has acknowledged them. He has felt something of the powers of the world to come; and yet, hurried on by the love of sin, or led astray by the fear of

man, he has poured contempt upon God's mercy, and renounced the Saviour in whom he professed to trust.

He has trampled under foot the Son of God. The aorist *καταπατήσας* points to the sin as historically past when the punishment is inflicted. And the word itself expresses a high degree of contempt and hatred. You trample under foot what you consider worthless and despicable. Nor is it contempt and hatred merely that are indicated, but a contempt and hatred so strong that they cannot be suppressed. Open and public dishonour is done to Christ by the apostate. *Καταπατήσας* expresses the very same idea as *παραδειγματίζειν* in the parallel passage at chap. vi. 6.

The apostate has counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing. By the blood of the covenant is meant the blood of Christ, which confirmed and ratified the covenant. Whether does *κοινὸν* signify impure, as being the blood of a transgressor, or common, as being nothing better than other blood? Chrysostom mentions both ideas, without deciding which is preferable: *καινὸν τί ἐστι; τὸ ἀκάθαρτον, ἢ τὸ μηδὲν πλέον ἔχον τῶν λοιπῶν*;—and interpreters are very much divided on the point. The Vulgate translates, *pollutum*; Luther, *unrein*; while Œcumenius explains the word thus, *τὸ μηδὲν τῶν ἄλλων διάφερων*. Now there is no doubt that in Hellenistic Greek *κοινὸς* is used both in the classic sense of common, and in the Jewish sense of unclean, as in Acts ii. 44 and Mark vii. 2. The question therefore comes to be, Which sense is most suitable to the scope of the passage? Now when it is considered that, of the three clauses which describe the conduct of the apostate, the first speaks of him as trampling Christ under foot, and the last as insulting the Spirit of grace, it seems as if the middle one would not be in keeping with the rest if you understood it merely as signifying that Christ's blood was not better than other blood. The meaning must be, that it is counted unclean and unholy. The wickedness of the apostate in thus dealing with the blood of Christ is aggravated by the clause *ἐν ᾧ ἡγιασθη*, by which he was sanctified. Was the apostate then sanctified? These words are wanting in many authorities, but the preponderance of evidence is in their favour. They are viewed by Lightfoot, Cocceius, and others, as

having Christ for their subject, the sense being the same as in John xvii. 19 ; but the construction requires that ἡγιασθη have the same subject as ἡγιασόμενος. The words are to be understood as spoken from the standpoint of membership in the church. The man passed for a Christian. He had dedicated himself to the service of God. It is not an inward spiritual purification that is indicated by ἡγιασθη, but consecration to the service of God : see at chap. x. 10.

And finally, the apostate has insulted the Spirit of grace. It is the Holy Ghost as the bestower of grace that is here meant. Or the Spirit may be designated the Spirit of grace, as being Himself the gift of God's grace. Now the person spoken of by the apostle had received the Spirit to some extent, as is plain from chap. vi. 4, where apostates are described as having been partakers of the Holy Ghost. But so great a change has passed upon him, that he now acts with contempt and insolence towards the Holy Ghost. His sinful feelings are shown in depreciating these gifts of the Spirit, which he formerly acknowledged, and to some extent experienced. Works of wonder, which carry with them the evident tokens of being from God, he audaciously ascribes to the devil. Any individual who had made a profession of faith in Christ, recognising Him as the Son of God, and who afterwards joined in the cry of the Pharisees, "He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the prince of devils," would fall under the condemnation denounced by the apostle. And when any person in our day, after feeling pleasure in reading the Bible, and tracing the hand of God in its revelations, and being sensible of an influence exerted by them over him, allows his heart to be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, falls away from his steadfastness, and sneers at the idea of God's spiritual presence and help, he has reason to dread that this condemnation has also come upon him.

Ver. 30. The conclusion drawn in the preceding verse regarding the doom of apostates is here confirmed by an appeal to two maxims of Scripture. In citing them, the apostle says, "For we know Him who hath said." Οἶδαμεν is emphatic : we know His truth, we know His power ; He is not a God that will suffer Himself to be mocked. The first passage is

taken from Deut. xxxii. 35; and it is remarkable that, while the citation deviates very considerably both from the Hebrew $\text{נָּקַם וְנָקַם יְיָ}$, and from the Septuagint $\text{ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκδικήσεως ἀνταποδώσω}$, it coincides exactly with Rom. xii. 19, even to the addition of λέγει Κύριος . This agreement furnishes some corroboration of the Pauline origin of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and at the very least it would prove a dependence of the writer upon Paul. The meaning of the maxim quoted is very plain. It belongs to God, as the rectoral governor of the universe, to inflict punishment. Avenging justice is His, and He will not allow His rule to be despised. The use made of this principle in Romans is to dissuade Christian men from avenging their own quarrels, and to induce them to leave their cause in the hands of God. The use made of it here is to demonstrate to the wicked the certainty of their being visited with a tremendous punishment. The two uses are different, but they are perfectly consistent.

The other maxim occurs both in Deut. xxxii. 36 and in Ps. cxxxv. 14 in the very same words. In the citation here made, ὅτι is omitted, and Κύριος and κρινεῖ are transposed. In Deuteronomy and Psalms the words seem to refer to God's faithful dealing with His people, in the way of defending them, and showing mercy to them. "He will judge His people, and He will repent Himself concerning His servants." And Grotius, Michaelis, Storr, Estius, and Turner conceive that it is the same idea the apostle means here to exhibit; but this view does not at all suit the scope of the passage, which bears upon the fearful danger of apostasy. Stuart finds no difficulty in the citation, because he supposes the meaning of the Old Testament passage to be, not, "He will repent Himself concerning His servants," but, "on His servants He will take vengeance." The construction, however, and the connection alike repudiate this version, both in Deuteronomy and in the psalm. The common translation is undoubtedly the correct one, and the sense thus evolved is quite suitable to the apostle's purpose; for the judgment of God's people, as described in Deuteronomy, consists in the infliction of punishment upon those who were their enemies. The merciful aspect of God's judgment has respect only to those who are truly His; but in regard to

enemies and apostates the very same judgment carries destruction along with it. Do you belong really to God's people? Then His judgment of you, though it may involve chastisement, will yet issue in your salvation. Do you merely wear the garb of Christians, or have you apostatized from the faith? Then God's judgment accomplishes your destruction. What is the nature of the judgment described in the passage in Deuteronomy? It has two aspects. God will avenge the blood of His servants, and will render vengeance to His adversaries, and will be merciful unto His land and to His people (Deut. xxxii. 43).

Ver. 31. This verse sums up in one strong statement the whole substance of the preceding paragraph: φοβερὸν τὸ ἐμπεσεῖν εἰς χεῖρας Θεοῦ ζῶντος—It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. These words are designed to exhibit the tremendous character of the punishment which awaits impenitent transgressors. They have made Him their enemy, who liveth for ever to avenge His cause. They have armed against themselves a Being of infinite and everlasting power. Says Chrysostom: εἰς χεῖρας Θεοῦ ἐμπεσεῖσθε ἐκείνο φοβερὸν τοῦτο οὐδὲν ἐστὶ τὸ εἰς χεῖρας ἀνθρώπων ἐμπεσεῖν (vol. xii. 269, C). It is true that in 2 Sam. xxiv. 14, falling into the hands of God, rather than of men, has the idea of greater safety connected with it; but the two passages are quite consistent: for in the one case it is a falling into God's hands with confidence in His grace that is meant, in the other it is a falling into God's hands as a hardened and impenitent sinner. Bengel's remark briefly and beautifully exhibits the difference: *bonum est incidere cum fide; temere, terribile*. Where there is faith, transgression may receive chastisement, but it will be pardoned; but where there is hardened impenitence, ruin is the inevitable consequence. Put your trust in God, and then, though His hand may fall upon you, it will be to chastise you, but He will chastise you in mercy; and He will be more considerate of you than any offended fellow-creature would be, for He is a Being of boundless love. But if you persist in your sins, and die in rebellion against His authority, then, when avenging justice seizes you, you will encounter woes immeasurably more severe than any mortal could inflict; for God is a Being of infinite

power. The penitent falls into the hand of God's mercy; the obdurate sinner falls into the hand of His justice.

Vers. 19-25 contain an admonition to faithfulness in worshipping God, to perseverance in the profession of Christianity, and to a lively interest in one another's spiritual well-being. Vers. 26-31 enforce this admonition, by exhibiting the awful guilt and danger of apostasy. In vers. 32-34 the apostle reminds the Hebrews of the successful struggle which they had maintained against difficulties in days gone by, with the view of encouraging them to patience, and perseverance, and effort (vers. 35, 36); and he both reminds them of the coming of the Lord (ver. 37), and he expresses the confident belief that they will not draw back (vers. 38, 39).

Ver. 32. *Ἀναμνήσκεισθε δὲ τὰς πρότερον ἡμέρας*—But call to mind the former days. As at chap. vi. 10 the apostle, after a similar exhibition of the guilt and danger of apostasy, had referred to the former faith and love of the Hebrews, so here he does the same. Quite analogous, too, is the connection of thought in Gal. iv. 13, where, after being warned of the danger of returning to the weak and beggarly elements of Judaism, the Galatians are reminded of the zeal which they had formerly shown when they were ready to pluck out their eyes and give them to the apostle. *Τὰς πρότερον ἡμέρας* carries back the mind a considerable period. Some idea of the space is suggested by chap. v. 12. The time referred to is the time when the Hebrews first became acquainted with the gospel; and therefore probably the persecutions mentioned are those which were endured in the days of Stephen, when so many were compelled to flee for their lives (Acts viii. 1), and in the days of Herod Agrippa, who killed James the brother of John, and threw Peter into prison (Acts xii. 1-3). *Φωτισθέντες* describes the Hebrews as newly converted, or brought to the knowledge of the truth. They were illuminated with the light of the gospel; they were instructed in the doctrines taught by Christ (see at chap. vi. 4). And the apostle's language suggests the idea, that whatever stores of secular knowledge men may have acquired, they are in darkness until they are brought under the instruction of the great Teacher. The light of mere civilisation is but a feeble glimmer, that in no way modifies the scriptural

declaration, that darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the people.

Πολλὴν ἄθλησιν ὑπεμείνατε παθημάτων—Ye endured a great conflict of troubles. These words describe both the magnitude of the dangers which assailed the Hebrews, and the courage with which they encountered them. Chrysostom and Theophylact remark that *ἄθλησιν* is an honourable word. It belongs to the later Greek, and denotes a combat of athletes or champions, which may be witnessed by admiring crowds. *Παθημάτων* is the genitive of object, and indicates the calamities or trials with which the Hebrews had to contend. *ὑπεμείνατε* means not simply “ye suffered,” but “ye endured or persisted in.” It expresses the perseverance and energy with which they engaged in the conflict. They did not murmur at the difficulties with which in providence they were summoned to contend. They did not passively submit to them, as evils that were inevitable. But they met them in a spirit of Christian heroism, holding fast their faith and integrity, and rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer for the sake of Christ.

Ver. 33. This verse points out two ways in which the Hebrews were exposed to suffering. *Τοῦτο μὲν, τοῦτο δέ*, occurs only here in the New Testament. It is frequently to be found in Herodotus. It is a distributive phrase, signifying “this indeed, this also; on the one hand, on the other” (see Schweigh. *Lex.*, Herod. *Οὕτως*). *First*, the Hebrews were assailed in their own persons. *Θεατρῶ* signifies to be on the stage, to bring on the stage; and because the theatre was frequently employed as the place where public punishments were inflicted, the word also came to mean, to hold up as a spectacle, to expose to public shame. In the verse before us, it corresponds very exactly in sense to *παραδειγματίζω*; and the statement made is quite analogous to 1 Cor. iv. 9: *ὅτι θέατρον ἐγενήθημεν*. The Hebrews had been exposed as a spectacle to the world, loaded with reproaches and persecutions. All manner of abusive language had been applied to them. They had suffered in their persons and in their property, and been treated as the offscourings of all things. *Secondly*, they had suffered as the companions of their brethren under persecutions. They had not stood aloof from one another in their respective days

of trial. They had acknowledged one another in difficulties ; they had visited one another in prison ; they had supplied one another's wants. And by this unconcealed sympathy, those who were not immediately assailed had often exposed themselves to reproach and danger. To sympathize with the victims of a persecutor is the sure way of attracting his rage to yourself. *Ἀναστρεφόμενων* is understood by Beza in the sense of "agitated," "tossed about," *agitari*. Ernesti renders it, "qui ita tractati sunt ;" and Stuart, "who were thus treated," although it is acknowledged by both that the existence of this signification is not susceptible of proof. The ordinary meaning of the word in the New Testament suits here quite well, "who so lived," "so spent their days," viz. in suffering and reproach. Theophylact : *τούτέστιν ἐν θλίψεσι καὶ ὀνειδισμοῖς*. Even this ordinary meaning, however, is susceptible of two shades, slightly different from one another. Schlichting, Limborch, Tholuck, and Bleek give a passive turn to the idea : "who lived in tribulation." So Luther : "denen es also gehet," with whom it thus goes. Others, as Dindorf, Wahl, Bretschneider, Böhme, Kuinöl, impart more of activity to the sense : "who thus lived, who thus battled with tribulation." In defence of the former shade of meaning, appeal is made to *θεαριζόμενοι*, as being what *οὕτως* refers to. In defence of the latter, it is said that the persons spoken of are described in ver. 32 as manfully encountering a great conflict of afflictions. The simple question is, To what preceding clause does *οὕτως* refer ? Now, plainly the structure of ver. 33 requires that its two clauses should be viewed as balanced against one another. *Οὕτως*, therefore, refers to *θεαριζόμενοι* ; and of course the words under consideration must mean "who so lived," viz. as made a gazing-stock to the world.

Ver. 34. This verse expresses the same thoughts which are exhibited in the two preceding verses. It stands particularly related to the 33d, but the order of the ideas is reversed. Here you find first what the Hebrews endured in taking part with those who were in affliction ; and this corresponds to the concluding clause of ver. 33 : *καὶ γὰρ τοῖς δεσμοῖς συνεπαθήσατε*. The received reading is *δεσμοῖς μου* ; but there are two other readings, viz. *δεσμοῖς*, standing alone, and *δεσμούς*. The greatest number of Greek MSS. are in favour of *δεσμοῖς μου*, but the

oldest MSS. support *δεσμίους*, as also the Syriac and Arabic versions, and the oldest fathers. This reading has found general favour in modern times, and is adopted by Griesbach, Knapp, Lachmann, Scholz, and Tischendorf. It is the one which, when supposed genuine, most readily accounts for the use of the rest: for the omission of one small letter produces *δεσμοῖς*, and then the need of a pronoun would suggest the addition of *μου*; which view is rendered all the more probable by the fact that a different pronoun has sometimes been found supplied, as in the Latin *vinculis eorum*. *Δεσμοῖς* also corresponds best to the parallel clause in ver. 33, though *δεσμοῖς μου* would make a good enough parallel, as it would stand to the other in the relation of a particular case to a general statement. If *μου* were the accredited reading, it would furnish an argument of some weight for the Pauline origin of this epistle, as in 2 Tim. i. 16 and Col. iv. 19 Paul makes a similar reference to his bonds. *Συνεπαθήσατε* expresses nearly the same idea as *κοινωνοὶ γεννηθέντες* in the preceding verse. The Hebrews sought the society of their friends in prison. They ministered to their wants, they addressed to them condolence and sympathy, and thus they exposed themselves to reproach and danger. Persecutors are ever ready to turn upon those who show any kindness to their victims, and to deal out to them the same measure; so that the task of ministering to the imprisoned is very properly ranked by the apostle as one of the Christian's conflicts. If *δεσμοῖς μου* be the true reading, and if Paul was the author of this epistle, then most probably the reference is to the period of his imprisonment at Cæsarea, during which, doubtless, he received sympathy and assistance from his Christian brethren in Palestine.

The second clause of this verse corresponds to the first of the preceding. Michaelis and Heinrichs understand *προσεδέξασθε* to mean "expected;" but although this is a signification borne by the word, and indeed the only one that Homer knows, still the other signification of "accepted, took, received," is of undoubted authority. It is this meaning which most certainly belongs to the word at chap. xi. 35, where a similar treatment of believers is described. The Hebrews took, accepted, willingly submitted to, the spoiling of their property; nay, they bore the loss with joy. They were animated by the spirit of James's

maxim, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations" (Jas. i. 2). No doubt they felt the injustice with which they were treated, and considered the loss of their possessions to be an evil in itself; but it was a suffering for righteousness' sake, and therefore it was infinitely to be preferred to the retention of their goods at the hazard of making shipwreck of faith. Temporal blessings are to be received with gratitude, and enjoyed without abuse; but they are ever to be held as of unspeakably inferior value to the prosperity of the soul. They are to be sacrificed without a scruple, when they can only be retained through some compromise of principle. As God's gift, they are to be used for the glory of God.

Vers. 34-39.—34. For the readiness, yea, the joy, with which the Hebrews took the spoiling of their goods, a reason is assigned in the last clause: *γινώσκοντες ἔχειν ἑαυτοῖς κρείττονα ὑπαρξιν ἐν οὐρανοῖς καὶ μένουσαν*. Besides *ἑαυτοῖς*, there are two other readings, viz. *ἐν ἑαυτοῖς* and *ἑαυτούς*. The sense of all the three is nearly the same; for although *ἐν ἑαυτοῖς* were the true reading, these words should not be connected with *γινώσκοντες*, as in the English version, but with *ἔχειν*, "that ye have in yourselves," viz. in that treasure of divine grace which God has put within you. *Ἐαυτοῖς* standing alone must be understood as the *dativus commodi*, "that ye have for yourselves." And if *ἑαυτούς* be the right reading, it is the accusative with the infinitive, "that ye yourselves have." The least supported of these readings is the first; and although the other two have much evidence in their favour, the preponderance lies with *ἑαυτοῖς*. The words *ἐν οὐρανοῖς* have also been regarded as a gloss (Lachmann, Tischendorf), and certainly there is a deficiency of evidence for them. If *ἐν ἑαυτοῖς* were the true reading of the preceding phrase, this would be a demonstration that *ἐν οὐρανοῖς* was no part of the text; for the superior treasure referred to would be that grace which exists in the believer's soul, and which is better than all outward wealth. But according to either of the other readings of the preceding phrase, the contrast must be viewed as lying between the wealth of this world, and the riches of glory that await the believer in the future state. And that this is the true contrast is most consistent with the use of the word *ὑπαρξιν*, which, like *ἰπάρχοντα*

in the first clause, denotes substance, goods, possessions, as in Acts ii. 45, where it is conjoined with κτήματα in the description of a sale of property. Whether or not, therefore, ἐν οὐρανοῖς be a gloss, there can be no doubt that it is a correct enough supplement as to sense. The substance spoken of is the heavenly inheritance. Abraham's faith led him to look for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And the Christian's faith does not less clearly discern that there is a rest remaining for the people of God, another and better country, even an heavenly. This expected substance is infinitely more than a counterpoise for the loss of all earthly possessions and honours. It is better in itself than any treasure of this world. It is perfectly adapted to the wants of our immortal nature. It is what infinite wisdom has appointed as the means of ministering to our felicity. It will perfectly satisfy every longing of our glorified spirits. Heaven is prepared for the saints, and the discipline of this life is preparing the saints for heaven. The capacities of the soul, and the riches of glory, are commensurate to one another. How different is it with the possessions of earth! Let a man gain all he could desire here, let every plan succeed to his wish; and still, upon the very summit up to which he has long been struggling, he may be discontented and miserable. Earthly good is not the soul's portion, for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth (Luke xii. 15). The heavenly substance, too, is durable. Earthly possessions are not so. The most solid structures of wealth and greatness are liable to be overthrown in a moment; and in all cases, death destroys our tenure of them. And the certainty of this is always a worm gnawing at the root of our temporal enjoyments. But the blessedness of heaven is secure against every adverse stroke. The treasures of the skies are neither liable to be corrupted by moth, nor rust, nor carried off by thieves. Short-lived as man is upon earth, he often outlives his earthly comfort; but with an immortal duration in heaven, he shall find his felicity continually growing, augmenting. When a century shall have passed, when a thousand years shall have rolled away, when myriads upon myriads of ages shall have come to an end, the blessedness of the redeemed shall only be commencing. Perfect felicity without end is the saint's portion.

Ver. 35. From the courage and patience manifested by the Hebrews under their former afflictions, the apostle now derives an argument to urge them to continued perseverance in the Christian course : *μὴ ἀποβάλητε οὖν τὴν παρρησίαν ὑμῶν*—Cast not away, therefore, your confidence. The Vulgate, J. Capellus, and Lœsner, view *ἀποβάλητε* as here meaning “lose,” *ne amittatis*; but although this signification undoubtedly does belong to the word, yet it also means “to cast away,” as in Mark x. 50, *ὁ δὲ ἀποβαλὼν τὸ ἱμάτιον αὐτοῦ*; and this signification is far more suitable here. The admonition given in this verse is substantially the same as in ver. 23, so that *ἀποβάλητε* is opposed to *κατέχωμεν*; and it is a voluntary relinquishment of Christianity that is spoken of in ver. 26. *Παρρησίαν* does not mean *libera professio*, as Beza and Grotius render it, but rather confidence, as in ver. 19, chap. iii. 6, iv. 16. The Vulgate rightly translates it *confidentiam*, Erasmus *fiduciam*, and Luther *Vertrauen*. This confidence is just a strong faith. Now, faith is represented as a shield, which must be firmly grasped. The greatest disgrace which a warrior could bring upon himself, was to throw away his shield in the hour of battle; and he also thus exposed himself to the most imminent peril. A similar disgrace and danger does the Christian soldier incur, when he casts away from him his trust in God. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John v. 4). We must not cast away our confidence, not for a perpetuity, not even for a moment. Christian confidence has connected with it the promise of a great reward. This reward is the better and enduring substance mentioned in the preceding verse. Heaven is the glorious inheritance that awaits the people of God. This blessedness is procured by the work of Christ, but it is bestowed as the reward of faith. It is not a reward earned by us, so that we can claim it as a debt; it is altogether of grace; but still its distribution is regulated according to the attainments of believers: just as a father may bestow gifts upon his children, to which strictly speaking they may have no claim, and still may proportion his favours to the assiduity and diligence of the different members of the family.

Ver. 36. *Γὰρ* does not here introduce any new ground of the preceding admonition additional to the recompense of reward

mentioned, but it rather states a reason why that admonition needed to be urged. This conjunction frequently refers to some omitted thought, and this is the case here: "Hold fast" your confidence; for ye are in circumstances of trial and difficulty, and therefore have need of patience and endurance. Stuart translates it "truly," "no doubt;" but this is quite arbitrary, and the finer filaments of thought are altogether lost sight of. *Ἱππομονῆς* does not mean passive submission, but firm endurance, grounded upon Christian confidence. The noun here has something of the same force as the verb in ver. 32, "Ye manfully bore up under a great fight of afflictions." And it is probable that the use of the word in this verse was suggested by the verb in ver. 32, and perhaps also, as Schmid, Storr, and Bleek suppose, by the words of Habakkuk, *ἰπόμεινον αὐτόν*, connected with the passage quoted in the two following verses, the whole of which must be supposed already floating before the apostle's mind. The phrase *τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ* has been very variously interpreted. Baumgarten and Bleek understand it to mean, "the sanctification of men by the offering of the body of Christ," appealing to vers. 7, 9, 10 of this chapter; but this shade of thought does not at all suit the construction of the whole clause: for whatever the will of God here mean, it is represented as something done, not for, but by men. Ernesti and Dindorf view the expression as meaning "to suffer what God appoints;" and they appeal to Acts xxi. 14, *τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Κυρίου γενέσθω*, "the will of the Lord be done." This comes nearer to the mind of the apostle, but still it is in some measure liable to the same objection, that the will of God is spoken of as done by men. It seems best, therefore, to understand the words as descriptive of Christian duty in general, but with a special reference to the duty of perseverance amid dangers and temptations. In the third petition of the Lord's prayer the words must have this general sense, for there are no misfortunes and sorrows in heaven to exercise the patience of the inhabitants. J. Capellus very properly observes, that the doing of the will of God, mentioned in the verse before us, must not be understood on the principle of the covenant of works, as if it were our doing that earned for us the reward, but on the principle of the covenant of grace, which rewards believers on the ground of Christ's work,

and in proportion to their own attainments. No Christian merits heaven; but still Christ rewards His people according to their works, and will say to them at last, "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord." Bengel is wrong when he supposes the aorist ποιήσαντες to refer to what the Hebrews are described in ver. 32 as having already done. The aorist has reference, not to the time at which the apostle is writing, but to the time when the Saviour comes to reward His people, and to receive them into glory. They are then declared to have done the will of God during their day of trial, and they receive accordingly the promised inheritance. For ἐπαγγεῖλαν means here, as in ix. 15, xi. 13, 39, Acts ii. 33, not the promise, but the thing promised.

Ver. 37. The statement of this verse comes in as an encouragement. Patient perseverance in the service of God will not fail to receive the promised reward. Nor will the advent of Him who is to bestow the reward be long delayed: ἔτι γὰρ μικρὸν ὅσον ὅσον—for yet how, how little. "Ὅσον is frequently applied to adjectives of size or quantity, to add intensity to them. It also sometimes bears the sense of "only," like the Latin *tantum*. And it is occasionally repeated for the sake of emphasis, as here, "how how little, how very little, only just a little." So in Aristoph. *Vesp.* 213: τί οὐκ ἀπεκοιμήθησαν ὅσον ὅσον στίλβην; Bleek views this whole clause as standing adverbially connected with the following, as if the whole were an answer to the question When? "for very shortly He will come." But the construction requires that, with De Wette, we make the clause a separate one, as in John xiv. 19, only with this difference, that the conjunction καὶ is omitted: "for it is a very little time, and then He will come." In the first clause we have the apostle's own words, although probably moulded upon Hab. ii. 3 and Isa. xxvi. 20. The last clause is manifestly taken from the Septuagint version of Habakkuk, with a slight change. In the Hebrew text the reference manifestly is to the vision regarding the destruction of the Chaldeans, of which vision it is declared that it should certainly be fulfilled: it might appear to tarry, but the Hebrews were to wait for it, and it would certainly be accomplished in due time. The Seventy, however, have not understood the vision as the thing spoken of in this clause; but they have applied it to a

person, doubtless the Messiah, as many Jews also have done. The apostle, too, in quoting the clause, applies it to the Saviour. We are not to suppose, however, that he is here adducing the passage as a proof; for there are not the same marks of appeal to authority, as in other cases where this is done. He is expressing his own ideas, and he uses the words of the Seventy, because they answered his purpose, and were familiar to his readers. Accordingly, he does not scruple to prefix the article to *ἐρχόμενος*, which makes a great change upon the meaning of the words. For without the article, the phrase is a Hebrew idiom, expressing the idea, "He will certainly come;" but with the article *ἐρχόμενος* is disjoined from *ἥξει*, so as to form the subject, and not merely the means of intensifying the verb: "He that is to come will come; the expected personage will arrive." *Ὁ ἐρχόμενος* is a frequent designation of the Messiah in the Gospels, applied to Him on the ground of His having been predicted in the Old Testament. It is sometimes used with reference to His first coming, as in Matt. xi. 3, Luke vii. 19; and sometimes also with reference to His second, as in Matt. xxiv. 30, Rev. iii. 11. Here plainly it must be the second coming that is meant. Mede, Ernesti, and Dindorf, suppose that the apostle refers to Christ's visitation of the Jews with punishment, in the overthrow of Jerusalem, and to the protection which His providence extended to His own people in those days of suffering. But the whole structure of the passage requires that we should consider it as referring to our Lord's personal return to this world, to collect His people from the four winds of heaven, and to place them in their final state of blessedness and glory: for the apostle has made mention of a better and enduring substance in heaven; he has admonished the Hebrews to hold fast the hope of such a recompense of reward; he assures them they shall receive the promised blessing after they have done the will of God; and in order to encourage them to patience and perseverance, he declares that the Saviour will not delay His coming. Now, unless this coming refers to the time when Christ is to bestow upon His people their final reward, the several parts of the passage do not hang together. It is objected, however, that the speed with which the coming is represented as taking place, is not consistent with the idea

that it is still a future event. But near and distant are relative terms. When eternity is brought into view, the duration of that better substance which the people of God are to receive in heaven, the whole expanse of time contracts into a point; just as the diameter of this world shrinks into nothing when you compare it with the distance of the sun; and then, again, the diameter of the earth's orbit almost disappears when you make it the basis of calculations with regard to the fixed stars. There are other passages, too, which do not admit of being applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, where similar terms are employed to describe the coming of Christ, as in Rev. iii. 11, xxii. 12: "Lo, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give to every man as his work shall be." It is generally allowed that the Apocalypse was written a good many years after the destruction of Jerusalem; but even if the earlier date for which some contend were adopted, these passages must be understood as referring to the close of the great drama of human affairs.

Ver. 38. The use of Habakkuk's words is continued in this verse. The arrangement of them, however, is reversed. In the Old Testament they stand thus: *ἐὰν ὑποστείλῃται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῷ ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται*. Böhme and Bleek rightly conceive the object of the apostle in transposing the clauses to be, that no one might imagine *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* to be the nominative to *ὑποστείλῃται*; and Bleek also thinks that the transposition effects a finer connection between the substance of vers. 38 and 39. One consequence, however, of the transposition is, that *δὲ* and *καὶ* hardly appear so appropriately used as in Habakkuk.

Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται corresponds to the Hebrew *וְהַיָּשׁוּבִים בְּאֱמוּנָהּ*. It admits of doubt whether the middle word here belongs to the subject or the predicate of the proposition. According to the existing accents, it is connected with *בְּאֱמוּנָהּ*; and Rosenmüller states the sense to be, "qui in veritate sua justus est, salvus erit." *אֱמוּנָהּ*, however, signifies faith as well as truth so that, according to the same connection, the sense would be, "qui per fidem suam justus est." And this really seems to be the meaning of the clause, as quoted in Rom. i. 17, Gal. iii. 11; for the apostle is speaking in those passages of being made just or righteous by faith as opposed to works. As quoted here,

however, the clause seems to be somewhat differently employed, and *ἐκ πίστεως* is rather to be viewed as belonging to the predicate; for the apostle is admonishing the Hebrews to continued trust and confidence in God, and is pointing out the advantages of this course: The just shall live by means of his faith. And the whole series of examples which follow in chap. xi. are designed to illustrate the manner in which saints are enabled to overcome difficulties by faith. The words, as they stand, are susceptible of either rendering, and the ideas brought out in both ways are quite correct. A man is made just by faith, but equally thereafter he continues to live by faith. The foundation of his Christian character is laid by faith, and the superstructure is reared through the same instrumentality. J. Capellus considers that *ἐκ πίστεως* was put in the centre intentionally, in order to make the clause capable of expressing both ideas, as they are both important, and both sound. In the Septuagint, *μοῦ* occurs in this clause, placed, according to some authorities, after *δίκαιος*, according to others after *ἐκ πίστεως*. Probably the origin of this reading was, that the Seventy found *בְּאֵמוּנָה* in their Hebrew manuscript, instead of *בְּאֵמוּנָי*. The meaning of it plainly in the one position is, "my righteous servant;" and in the other, "by faith or confidence in me." Not a few manuscripts also insert *μοῦ* in Hebrews, and it is adopted by Lachmann and Tischendorf; but the weight of evidence is against it, and its absence in Rom. i. 17, Gal. iii. 11, seems sufficient to settle the question.

There is considerable difficulty connected with the last clause of this verse. The Hebrew text runs thus: *הִנֵּה עֹלָה בִּלְאִשָּׁוֹן נַפְשׁוֹ*. Jarchi, Rosenmüller, and Hitzig understand these words to mean, "Behold the proud, his soul is not right in him;" and our translators have taken substantially the same view, "Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him." The Seventy, however, have given quite a different translation: *ἐὰν ὑποστεύληται, οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῷ*. Grotius supposes that they must have read in their Hebrew text *עָלָה* instead of *עֹלָה*, and *נַפְשִׁי* instead of *נַפְשׁוֹ*; but Pococke contends that there is no need of this conjecture, for that the existing Hebrew text bears the rendering which they exhibit; and he appeals to Jonah iv. 8 and Isa. li. 20 for a similar use of *עָלָה*.

Also, both he and L. Capellus conceive that יִשְׂרָאֵל is formed not from יִשְׂר , but from יִשְׂרָר , which means, in Arabic, to be pleased with, to delight in; and the suffix of יִשְׂרָר they refer to God. Bleek professes himself to be at a loss how to understand the words of the Septuagint, and what should be considered the nominative to ὑποστείλῃται . The immediately preceding noun is a designation of the Messiah; but this of course cannot be the subject of ὑποστείλῃται . Probably the meaning is this: "Wait for Him who is coming: if any man does not wait, if any man withdraws from duty, faints, my soul hath no pleasure in him." It is difficult to see what other sense can be affixed to the words of the Seventy, and this certainly is the sense which the words must bear as employed in Hebrews. ὑποστέλλειν denotes to lower the sails of a ship, to draw back, to retire, as in Gal. ii. 12, $\text{ὑπέστέλλεν καὶ ἀφώρισεν ἑαυτόν}$. What is the nominative to it in the epistle? One would naturally say ὁ δίκαιος , the immediately preceding noun, but for the incongruity which would thus be originated. The two clauses are contrasted with one another, and refer to persons of a different stamp. Winer supposes that the general term ἄνθρωπος must be abstracted, as it were, from δίκαιος , and supplied as the nominative to ὑποστείλῃται (Winer's *Grammatik*, § 49); and it seems a decisive argument in defence of this view, that a similar nominative must necessarily be supplied in the Septuagint, for there the clause containing ὁ δίκαιος comes after.

Ver. 39. The apostle concludes this section with expressing his confidence in the Hebrews. He has been speaking of withdrawalment and backsliding, but he does not anticipate that they are going to apostatize. He conjoins them with himself in a declaration of unfaltering attachment to the gospel. So, at chap. vi. 9, after pointing out the dangers of apostasy, he says, "But we are persuaded better things of you." ὑποστολή is an abstract noun, which bears here the same signification as the verb in the preceding verse. It is governed in the genitive by ἐσμέν , the force of which construction, coupled with the negative particle, is, that the persons spoken of do not belong to backsliding (Bernhardy, *Syn.* 165). Backsliding cannot claim them as its own. On the contrary, they belong to faith. Faith has set its seal of ownership upon them. In short, the meaning

is, we are not backsliders, but believers. Though the apostle had exhibited in vivid language the ruin of apostasy, in order to stimulate the Hebrew Christians to watchfulness; yet he cherished a firm persuasion, not only with regard to himself, but also with regard to them, that they would persevere with unfaltering step in the path of duty. The consequences alike of backsliding and of persevering faith are exhibited in this verse, *εἰς* pointing to the issue or goal in both cases. *Ἀπώλειαν* designates the ruin or perdition which divine justice will certainly bring upon ungodly men, as in Rom. ix. 22, Phil. iii. 19. And the ruin meant is not the painful consequences of sin in this world, but the everlasting destruction with which the wicked are to be overwhelmed, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thess. i. 7-9). Contrasted with *εἰς ἀπώλειαν*, stands *εἰς περιποίησιν ψυχῆς*. *Περιποιεῖσθαι* signifies to obtain, to acquire, and frequently also in the Septuagint to preserve in life, and *περιποίησις* means acquisition. In 1 Thess. v. 9 the phrase *εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας* occurs, for the obtaining of salvation; and in 2 Thess. ii. 14, *εἰς περιποίησιν δόξης*, for the obtaining of glory. The phrase before us is exactly similar, and must mean, to, or for, the obtaining of life. In our version it is rendered "to the saving of the soul," and no doubt *ψυχῇ* means soul as well as life, and *περιποίησις* means preservation as well as acquisition; but, after all, the two versions are substantially the same. The words of our Lord bring out the true sense of the passage: "He that loveth his life shall lose it, and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal" (John xii. 25). Ebrard contends that the word *ψυχῇ* must be understood in the Old Testament sense of earthly life, and that the phrase before us must be understood as referring to the preservation of the Hebrew believers amid the dangers and persecutions to which they were exposed. But this idea is opposed to the whole scope of the passage. Apostasy is not represented by the apostle as exposing merely to temporal loss, nor is faith represented as merely procuring temporal blessings. On the contrary, the punishment of apostasy is exhibited as something much more dreadful than the stoning

to death which was practised under the law, and the reward of faith is said to be a better and enduring substance in heaven. Besides, let it be noticed that the language before us is general. It does not describe a special blessing or favour which the Hebrews were to receive. Its fair import is, that wherever there is *ὑποστολή* there there will be *ἀπώλεια*, and wherever there is *πίστις* there there will be *περιποίησις ψυχῆς*. But will any man say that apostates are invariably ruined in this world, and Christians invariably rescued from danger? Apostates often save their lives by their apostasy, and believers suffer death because they will not deny Christ. It admits of no question, therefore, that *περιποίησις ψυχῆς* refers, not to the preservation of the life from the assaults of those who have power to kill the body in this world; but to the preservation or keeping of it, of which our Lord speaks, after persecution has done its utmost.

CHAPTER XI.



THE apostle has now admonished the Hebrews to steadfastness and perseverance, that they may obtain the promised recompense; and he proceeds, with the view of enforcing the admonition, to exhibit the true idea of faith, and to illustrate the subject by examples cited from the Old Testament. He has contrived to use the word *πίστεως* near the close of the preceding section; and thus a natural and palpable transition is made to the topic he now intends to handle. We are of faith.

Vers. 1-3. *Ἔστι δὲ πίστις ἐλπίζομένων ὑπόστασις*. That *πίστις* is here the subject, and *ὑπόστασις* the predicate, should never have been doubted. Erasmus and Bœhme argue, from the prominent position assigned to *ἔστι*, that the clause should be understood as affirming the existence of such a principle as faith, the apostle having in his view some persons who denied this. There is a faith, the substance of things hoped for. But Bleek, Tholuck, and De Wette rightly remark, that such a position is often assigned to *ἔστι* for the sake of emphasis, when there is no doubt that it is merely the copula, as in Luke viii. 11, 1 Tim. vi. 6. In the earlier editions of his *Grammar*, Winer took the same view as Erasmus and Bœhme; and he gave special prominence to the argument of Bœhme, that the use of *γὰρ* in ver. 2 is not compatible with the common view of ver. 1. In the last edition, however, he avows a change of opinion, and acknowledges that the first verse must be considered as a definition of faith. Indeed, to suppose that the apostle is here merely affirming the existence of faith, is not congruous with what is contained in the preceding chapter, where not only the abstract existence of the principle, but its

existence even in his readers themselves, has been presupposed. And with less propriety still can we believe that, in these circumstances, such a long list of examples would be adduced to establish such a point. But the pertinency of these examples is at once apparent, when it is considered that their object is not to prove the existence of faith, but to illustrate the description given of its nature. And as to the argument built upon γάρ, we shall see how groundless it is when we come to ver. 2.

Ἑπόστασις sometimes signifies foundation; and Calvin, Beza, Carpzov, and Schulz suppose the statement of the apostle to be, that faith is the ground of expected blessings. Faith, doubtless, is the ground on which the hope of them rests, but it can hardly be said to be the ground of the blessings themselves. Ἑπόστασις sometimes means substance, as in chap. i. 3; and Chrysostom, Theodoret, Erasmus, Vatablus, Bengel, and Bretschneider follow this sense here, making the apostle mean, that although the promised blessings are still future, yet faith so realizes them, that they are felt as if they were actually present. The soul feels their certainty, and enjoys them. They are not dreams, but realities. They are not phantasms, but substance. Οἶον ἢ ἀνάστασις οὐ παραγέγονεν οὐδὲ ἔστιν ἐν ὑποστάσει, ἀλλ' ἢ ἐλπίς ὑφίστησιν αὐτὴν ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ ψυχῇ (Chrys. xii.). This is quite true; and yet, after all, there seems to be an impropriety in saying that faith is the substance of anticipated enjoyments. Such a bold figure was hardly to be expected in anything having the shape of a definition. There is a third meaning of ὑπόστασις, viz. confidence, confident expectation, which is adopted here by Luther, Grotius, Hammond, Michaelis, and others. This meaning occurs at chap. iii. 14. It is also to be found in 2 Cor. ix. 4, xi. 17, Ps. xxxix. 8. It is a signification about which there can be no doubt, and it best suits the verse before us. Faith is not the foundation of expected blessings, nor is it their substance, but it is confidence in regard to them. The objects of faith are absent, but perfect confidence is felt as to their existence and exhibition in due season. This is a very accurate description of faith, and every word bears its true and unstrained signification.

The apostle adds: πραγμάτων ἔλεγχος οὐ βλεπομένων. The verb ἐλέγχειν signifies to prove, to demonstrate, to convince; and

the noun denotes proof, and also conviction. Of this latter shade of meaning there is an undoubted example in 2 Tim. iii. 16. And this is the most suitable acceptance in the passage before us. *Ἡ πίστις τοίνυν ἐστὶν ὁψις τῶν ἀδύλων* (Chrysos. xii.). *Firma persuasio* is the rendering of Hammond.

The two clauses of this verse are to a certain extent synonymous, for things hoped for are things not yet seen. The latter phrase, however, is more comprehensive than the former. They run parallel, but the one shoots out beyond the other. Under things not seen must be included not merely future blessings, such as those mentioned in vers. 10, 14, but also present and past things which are removed beyond our inspection, such as the Divine Being Himself, as stated in ver. 6, and the manner of the creation, as exhibited in ver. 3. Whatever, in short, we believe, whether it be past or present or future, on the authority of Scripture, is an object of faith. It has been asserted by Schulz and others, that the idea of faith in the Epistle to the Hebrews is totally different from Paul's conception of it, and that this of itself is sufficient to prove that Paul could not be the author of this book. With Paul, it is said, faith always has respect to something present, but in the Epistle to the Hebrews it always looks to something future. This distinction, however, is utterly groundless, as is plain from vers. 3, 6, where faith has reference to what is past and present; and many of the other examples quoted throughout the chapter have as much reference to present time as to future; whilst, on the other hand, in Paul's epistles it refers to the future as well as to the present. The fact is, that in the writings of Paul and in the Epistle to the Hebrews faith is substantially the same thing. It is the belief of a divine testimony, whether that testimony refer to what is past or present or future. In Romans, faith has a special reference to the finished work of Christ as the ground of acceptance, because justification is the great subject of which this epistle treats. In Hebrews, again, faith has a prevailing reference to future blessings, because the duty of perseverance amid all dangers and temptations occupies a large portion of this book. In short, there is no greater difference between the views given of faith in the two epistles, than the difference of their subjects is perfectly sufficient to account for. In other acknowledged

writings of Paul, where justification is not his subject, where he touches upon points similar to those handled in Hebrews, faith wears a garb exactly the same as in the passage before us, as in 2 Cor. v. 7, "We walk by faith, and not by sight;" that is, by the faith of invisible realities, by the faith of an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, which Christ is preparing for us (2 Cor. v. 1, 6, 7).

Ver. 2. *Ἐν ταύτῃ γὰρ ἐμαρτυρήθησαν οἱ πρεσβύτεροι.* The connection of this verse with the foregoing is very apt to be misapprehended. It is not a mere statement that certain persons were celebrated in regard to faith. The emphasis lies upon the word *πρεσβύτεροι*, which must be understood, neither as meaning old men, nor men invested with office, but ancients, men of the olden time. The persons referred to are described by Theodoret as having flourished before the law and under the law. They lived before the Son of God was revealed from heaven, before the promises received their fulfilment in the rising of the Sun of righteousness. Yet they believed these promises. They cherished a confident expectation of the coming of the Messiah. They had a firm conviction of things not seen as yet. It is obvious, therefore, that *γὰρ* is used with perfect propriety in this verse. It introduces a confirmation, grounded upon facts, of the account given of faith in ver. 1. The features of faith there mentioned were exhibited in the ancients, the very time of whose existence implied that they had not yet received the fulfilment of the promise, as is explicitly stated in ver. 39, where their good report through faith is again brought into view. Just such a faith as is described in ver. 1 the ancients had. *Ταύτη* does not mean *it*, but *this*—this faith, a faith of this kind. *Μαρτυρεῖσθαι* frequently signifies, in Scripture, to be borne witness to as good, to be appoved and praised. Sometimes the witness-bearers are men, as in Acts vi. 3, x. 22; but throughout the Epistle to the Hebrews it is God or the Scriptures whose testimony is referred to when this word is used. What is the force of *ἐν* in this verse? It does not seem to differ materially from *διὰ* in vers. 4, 39: by faith, by or through means of faith. The very word, however, occurs in a similar phrase in 1 Tim. v. 10: *ἐν καλοῖς ἔργοις μαρτυρουμένη*—well reported of for good works, or in respect of good works. The meaning

of the whole verse, therefore, is this : For it was a faith of this kind for which the ancient saints were extolled by God.

Ver. 3. The first illustration brought forward of the nature of faith differs from all the rest. It is not the case of a believing individual, but an object of faith ; a fact recorded, which we could only know on the authority of Scripture. A long chronological list of cases is in the mind of the apostle ; and as that list goes back to the very commencement of time, naturally enough the creation presents itself as a thing which we can only know by faith. True, there are grounds in nature on which reason might infer that all things were made by a Being of wisdom and power ; but the mode of the creation, as described in Genesis, could never have been discovered by man's own researches. Yea, even the fact of the creation, where the Bible has been unknown, has seldom been grasped by men themselves. They have rather indulged in vain dreams about the eternal existence of matter, and the origination of the present order of things by the fortuitous concourse of atoms or the inherent powers of nature. *Πίστει νοοῦμεν*. Faith is here exhibited as a spiritual power or organ—that perceptive faculty of the mind by which we apprehend the truth spoken of. The mind grounds its belief, in this case, not upon investigation, or experience, or deduction, but upon the testimony of Holy Scripture. *Νοέω* designates the apprehension of things which the mind forms, not through the external senses, but through its intellectual eye. *Τοὺς αἰῶνας* means the world, as in chap. i. 2. *Κατηρτισθαι* signifies to be constructed, framed, or made. It does not necessarily imply being made out of nothing, so as to designate what we call an act of creation ; but neither does it necessarily exclude this idea. It signifies to be brought to the condition of an orderly and finished production ; and with perfect propriety it may be employed in describing an act of creation, more especially when the object of the writer is to exhibit the thing created as skilfully put together. In Ps. lxxiv. 16 it is applied not only to the making of the sun, but also to the making of light, the account of which in the book of Genesis marks out most precisely an act of creation : “Let there be light, and there was light.” And accordingly the framing of the world is here said by the apostle to have been accomplished

ῥήματι Θεοῦ, by the word of God. This phrase does not designate Christ. That God created all things by His Son, is plain from John i. 3 and Heb. i. 2 ; but it is λόγος, and not ῥήμα, that is the designation of Christ as the Word. What is here meant by the apostle, is God's mandate or will. The great Creator did not need to make laborious efforts in order to construct the universe. He neither required tools nor materials. He spake, and it was done ; He commanded, and all things stood fast. Only a volition was needed on the part of God to bring this fair world into being, and to adapt the several objects of nature to their respective uses and ends.

Εἰς τὸ μὴ ἐκ φαινομένων τὰ βλεπόμενα γεγονέναι. These words do not describe God's purpose in creation, but they exhibit a conclusion drawn by the apostle himself, εἰς being equivalent to ὥστε, as in 2 Cor. viii. 6. There is very great difference of opinion, however, as to the meaning of the clause even in this view. First, there are two modes of construing the passage. Most interpreters—Chrysostom, Theodoret, Theophylact, Erasmus, Luther, J. Capellus, Gerhard, Calovius, Raphelius, Tholuck—transpose μὴ so as to make it qualify φαινομένων ; and in their view, the statement of the apostle is, that visible objects were made out of things not apparent. But such a transposition of the negative particle is arbitrary and indefensible. It could only be allowed, if there were no other tolerable method of eliciting sense out of the words. There may be cases where a similar transposition must be made ; but certainly there is no necessity for it here, and therefore the existing grammatical arrangement ought to be followed. Besides, when μὴ is supposed to qualify γεγονέναι, there can be no question that it is the proper negative particle to stand between εἰς or ὥστε and the infinitive (see Liddell and Scott's *Lexicon*) ; whereas, if it be supposed connected with φαινομένων, then it admits of doubt whether οὐ was not rather to be expected ; and it is a fact that Chrysostom, as Tholuck acknowledges, when expressing the ideas in his own words, says : ἐξ οὐκ ὄντων, ἐκ τῶν οὐχ ὑφεστώτων. Ebrard, however, contends that μὴ is the only proper negative particle that could have been coupled with φαινομένων, since οὐ φαινομένων would only mean things which *de facto* did not appear, whereas μὴ φαινομένων means things

which neither did nor from their nature could appear—things necessarily invisible. But, after all, this only shows that *μὴ* might have been used by the apostle before *φαινομένων*, if it had been his purpose to speak of real though invisible existences; but it does not alter the fact that, according to the actual arrangement of the words, it is naturally to be referred to *γεγονέναι*. Another decisive argument against the transposition proposed is, that the apostle would thus be made positively to affirm that the world was constructed out of existing though invisible materials,—an affirmation which we shall see immediately is inconsistent with the inferential character of the clause. The statement would be, that the visible universe was formed from materials, invisible it is true, but still really existing. Some imagine these invisible materials to be the chaos which is described in Gen. i. 2, when the earth was without form, and void, and darkness brooded over the face of the deep. But although such an unformed and dark mass might be designated *οὐ φαινόμενον*, as not being visible for want of light, it could not be represented as *μὴ φαινόμενον*, a thing not capable of being seen in any circumstances. Others imagine that the apostle refers to invisible eternal ideas concealed in the divine mind, in accordance with which, according to the Platonic philosophy, the visible universe was constructed. But such ideas could not be represented as that out of which the world was made, but only as the pattern after which it was made. Tholuck and Ebrard conceive that *μὴ φαινομένων* designates the invisible causality of the divine power; and they refer to Rom. i. 20, where *τὰ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ* is employed as a designation of God's eternal power and Godhead. And this is the best view that could be taken, according to the principle of connecting *μὴ* with *φαινομένων*; for the idea brought out is, that the visible universe arose into being from the eternal power and energy of God, which are apparent not in themselves, but only in the effects which they produce. The causalities that lie hid in the divine nature are altogether invisible.

The actual arrangement of the words, however, requires that *μὴ* be viewed as qualifying *γεγονέναι*; and the statement of the apostle, therefore, is, that the visible universe was not made out of things that either did or could appear. There were no

materials, no objects for the great Architect to work upon. Does this mean that the world was made of nothing? Bleek says no. He allows, indeed, that this idea was very probably in the apostle's mind; but he contends, that the thing actually expressed is, that plants, and animals, and men, were not produced at first as they are now, from seeds and by generation, but by the creative mandate of God. This is all quite true; but the apostle is not speaking merely of organized individual objects, that grow and live for a time, and are then followed by others of the same kind. He is speaking of visible objects in general, the earth and the sea, the sun, the moon, and the stars, to which, as continuing from generation to generation, the remark of Bleek is altogether inapplicable. When the comprehensive character of the apostle's statement is kept in view, it is plain that it can only mean one of two things,—either that the world was made of nothing, that is, made without any pre-existing materials, or that it was not made of things palpable to the eye, but constructed out of invisible and impalpable, though really existing materials. Now the former of these is the one which the circumstances of the case oblige us to adopt. For observe, the clause under consideration does not contain an independent statement. The words embody an inference from the preceding scriptural maxim, that the worlds were made by the word of God. Now let us consider how the two ideas under consideration would respectively hang as conclusions upon this principle. God made all things by a word or mandate. Does this declaration prove, or imply, or suggest, that visible objects were made out of materials really existing, though invisible? It proves nothing of the kind. If the last clause of the verse has reference to the formation and arrangement of the world out of materials existing in a state of chaos, these materials might be either visible or invisible, so far as we could gather from the statement, that it was the word of God which operated upon them, to bring them into a state of order and beauty. In short, there would be no coherence between the apostle's premises and his conclusion. On the other hand, the statement, that by a word God commanded the visible universe into being, naturally suggests the idea that He had no materials, either visible or invisible, to work upon, and needed none. He made all things

of nothing. Here there is a real connection between the principle and the conclusion drawn. To this conclusion, however, Ebrard objects, that it is not, properly speaking, a principle of faith at all, but a speculation or philosophical maxim. But this is trifling. Call it what you please, it is a conclusion drawn in the exercise of reason from a scriptural statement; but being correctly drawn, and drawn by an apostle, it is a proper object of faith. But, after all, one of Ebrard's own proposed interpretations of the clause is as much a speculation or philosophical maxim; for he conceives that *μὴ φαινόμενον* may perhaps designate ideas, in the Platonic sense of the word, eternally existing in God, and serving as the archetypes after which the visible universe was fashioned. There is no solid objection, therefore, to the idea, that the apostle's meaning is, "all things were made out of nothing." This idea hangs best in connection with the preceding clause, and it best suits the construction of the words themselves. At the same time, the other idea advanced by Ebrard, which is also the one Tholuck defends, that the negation of *φαινόμενον* means the invisible causality of the divine power, or the creative energy of God, is not liable to any very serious objection. It is not substantially different from the interpretation which we have given. It certainly implies all we have exhibited as the sense of the passage, viz. that there were no materials, either visible or invisible, out of which the worlds were made. Still the preposition *ἐκ* more naturally points to the source out of which things were brought by the word of God, than to the causality or creative energy itself. In the phrase *υἱοῦ τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ*, in Rom. i. 3, *σπέρματος* is not exhibited as the power which produced the human body of Christ, but as the source from which that body was brought by the power of God. The same remark applies to *γένομενον ἐκ γυναικός*, in Gal. iv. 4, produced from a woman, but produced by God's power. On the other hand, where the efficient cause or source of power is intended to be pointed out, *γίνομαι* is followed by *παρά*, or *ὑπό*, or *διά*, as in Luke ix. 7, *τὰ γενόμενα ὑπ' αὐτοῦ πάντα*, as in Matt. xxi. 42, *παρὰ Κυρίου ἐγένετο αὕτη*. In John, too (i. 3, 10), we find the phrases *πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο* and *ὁ κόσμος δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο*. These examples justify us in supposing, that in the passage before us, it is the word, or

command, or volition of God, which is exhibited as the efficient cause of the creation, and that ἐκ φαινομένων points out a source in reference to which it is denied that God brought the world out of it. By faith we know that the worlds were made by the word of God, so that visible objects were not produced from pre-existing materials of the same kind, but, on the contrary, were produced by divine power from nothing. The great Architect of the universe needed, as we have said, neither tools nor materials. His all-powerful fiat lighted up the sun in the firmament of heaven, spread stars innumerable over the face of the sky, poised this solid earth upon nothing, and clothed its spacious fields with verdure and beauty.

Vers. 4-6. The first individual case cited for illustration is that of Abel: πίστει πλεονα θυσιῶν Ἀβελ παρὰ Κάιν προσήνεγκε τῷ Θεῷ. Πλείων primarily refers to number and quantity; but it is also used to express quality, as in Matt. vi. 25, xii. 41, 42, Rev. ii. 19. Here, obviously, it means "better, more excellent." Bleek well observes that, if the apostle had intended to express the idea of more frequent or more abundant, the plural πλεονας θυσιῶν would have been requisite for this purpose. Wherein did the superiority of Abel's offering consist? Stuart says it was superior because offered in faith, whilst that of Cain was presented without faith. Now this is quite true. Let the matter of an offering or service be ever so excellent, yet, if the worshipper have not the right frame of mind, it cannot be acceptable to God. There may be attendance at the house of prayer, there may be the formal observance of the Sabbath-day, there may be liberal contribution to religious objects, and yet, for want of a faithful and believing heart, the whole may be but a mass of sin cloaked with the borrowed robes of religion. Still it was not faith merely which constituted the superiority of Abel's offering. Πίστει does not qualify πλεονα, but rather belongs to the verb. The meaning is, not that Abel's offering was better by faith, but that by faith he was led to present a sacrifice better in itself. Subjectively, Abel's act of worship was superior to Cain's, because performed in a right state of mind; but objectively, also, it was superior, because his faith led him to select the right kind of offering. Unless this be allowed, it would follow that, although Abel had

offered the fruits of the ground, and Cain the firstlings of flocks, still the offering of Abel would have been in *all* respects the most acceptable. But this is hardly consistent with the narrative in Genesis; for there we find that God's acceptance of the one brother, and displeasure with the other, had both a subjective and an objective ground: "And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering, but unto Cain and to his offering He had not respect" (Gen. iv. 4, 5). Without a doubt, these words imply that the matter of Abel's offering was more excellent and suitable than that of Cain's; and one can hardly entertain a doubt that this was the idea of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who has insisted so much on the indispensableness of blood to the remission of sin and the acceptance of the sinner. Now we are told that it was faith which led Abel to present the sacrifice which he offered. But faith is the belief of a divine testimony. It is the confident expectation of things hoped for, because God has promised them. It is a conviction felt in regard to things not seen, because God has revealed their existence. The question, therefore, comes to be, Is there any divine testimony recorded in the book of Genesis prior to the time of Abel, and referring to future ages, on which Abel's faith could rest? There is such a testimony in Gen. iii. 15, where we are told that the seed of the woman was to bruise the head of the serpent, whilst it was to bruise his heel. Now, without supposing all we now know from the New Testament to have been known to Adam and his family, as embodied in this promise, this much at least is evident, that they would see it implied that some descendant of Eve was to repair the mischief occasioned by the fall, and that in so doing he would suffer from the rage of the serpent. What could Abel's faith therefore be, but the belief of this promise, the confident expectation that it would be realized—the conviction that, though not yet seen, the fulfilment would come? Let any other divine promise be pointed out in Genesis prior to Abel's time which can be supposed the ground of his faith. Without a doubt, it was faith in this promise which led Abel to select the particular kind of offering which he did present. Whether there were any other statements made by God to the first human family, that would give them clearer ideas than it seems to us the words

referred to were fitted to suggest, we know not. The familiar conversation described as taking place between God and Cain, would seem to warrant the supposition that much more was spoken to our first parents than the brief promise recorded by Moses; and they might have far clearer ideas of the design of sacrifice than the bulk of interpreters are disposed to allow. At all events, this is undeniable, that the promise about the seed of the woman was given prior to the time of Abel, and that it is the only promise recorded as belonging to that early date. Yet the apostle declares that Abel had faith. And it cannot but appear remarkable that his faith led him to select the very kind of offering which was afterwards instituted by express divine authority, and which is declared in this epistle to have been the shadow or prefiguration of the one great sacrifice of atonement presented by the Lord Jesus Christ. Without the shedding of blood, there was no remission of sin (Heb. ix. 22). Abel presented a bloody offering, but Cain restricted himself to the fruits of the ground.

It has also been supposed that the superiority of Abel's offering consisted partly in the circumstance that he selected the very best of his flock for presentation to God, whereas Cain took just what came to his hand. This idea does not rest upon any very solid foundation; and yet it cannot be said to be altogether groundless, for the words of Genesis are these: "Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord; and Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock, and of the fat thereof." And we can readily believe that, as Abel was deeply imbued with religious feeling, he would be much more careful than Cain in selecting the materials of his offering; for, as Owen justly remarks, it is our duty to present to God in every kind of service the very best we are able to give. We are not to let the world have the kernel, and put off God with the husk. We are not to give the prime and vigour of our days to Satan, and the decrepitude and feebleness of age to God. We are not to expend the bulk of our substance upon ourselves, and appropriate the mere leavings to religion.

Δι' ἧς ἐμαρτυρήθη εἶναι δίκαιος. What is the antecedent to *ἧς*? Theophylact and Cramer say *θυρίαν*, and there is nothing in the structure of the verse which offers any decided barrier

to this idea. Still, as faith is the grand subject of the apostle's discourse throughout the chapter, and as *πίστις* and *δίκαιος* have already been exhibited in special mutual dependence, it seems preferable here to view *πίστει* as the antecedent. The exactly similar structure, too, of ver. 7, where *δι' ἧς*, although much further removed from *πίστει*, must be viewed as looking back to that word, is quite sufficient to decide the question. It was not the sacrifice viewed simply in itself which was the ground or proof of Abel's being just, but it was the faith in which the sacrifice was offered. By faith Abel obtained witness that he was just. He was testified of as being righteous. By whom was this testimony borne? Undoubtedly the testimony referred to is that of God; for the apostle adds the words, *μαρτυροῦντος ἐπὶ τοῖς δώροις αὐτοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ*. And the testimony meant is to be found in Gen. iv. 4, where we are told that "the Lord had respect unto Abel, and to his offering." It is also supposed by the Greek fathers, that the apostle refers to Gen. iv. 7, where, according to the Septuagint version, Cain is blamed for not offering rightly, nor with proper discrimination, which is held as implying approbation of Abel's procedure. There is no inconsistency in supposing that both passages may have been in the apostle's view; and it is a very legitimate conclusion from them both, that Abel was accepted in consequence of the faith which appeared in his offering. The resemblance of Abel's case to Abraham's is obvious. Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness; which Paul employs as one of the leading proofs of the great doctrine of justification by faith. Doubtless *δίκαιος*, being here coupled with *δι' ἧς*, that is, *πίστεως*, is used in the Pauline sense as descriptive of a person accepted through faith. This becomes the more obvious, when it is considered that in ver. 7 the apostle, describing the case of Noah, uses phraseology exactly similar to that of the Epistle to the Romans: *τῆς κατὰ πίστιν δικαιοσύνης*. The words of Philo, too, are very remarkable, as pointing to the same conclusion: *εὖ δὲ τὸ φάναι, λογισθῆναι τὴν πίστιν εἰς δικαιοσύνην αὐτῷ*.

Καὶ δι' αὐτῆς ἀποθανὼν ἔτι λαλεῖ. External and internal evidence alike decide for *λαλεῖ* as the correct reading, in preference to *λαλεῖται*. That *αὐτῆς* refers, like *ἧς*, to *πίστει*, admits

of no reasonable doubt. Bēngel and Moldenhauer conceive that this word should be construed in connection with ἀποθανών, "Thus having died in faith, he speaketh;" but the great bulk of expositors rightly connect it with λαλεῖ, "By faith he speaketh, although dead." It is universally supposed that the apostle here refers to what is said in Gen. iv. 10, about the blood of Abel crying from the ground; and this is made certain by the fact, that there is another undoubted reference in Heb. xii. 24 to the same declaration. Still it admits of question whether the apostle merely meant to repeat that ancient statement, using the present tense for the sake of lively impression, although the time was now past; or whether he is not rather to be viewed as grounding upon the words of the Old Testament a declaration of his own, applicable to the present time. In Genesis it is the blood of Abel, and not Abel himself, that is represented as speaking; and the present tense is employed, because the vengeance due for the fratricide was not yet inflicted. But here it is Abel who speaks, and he speaks by his faith. It seems more probable, therefore, that although the passage in Genesis suggested the words before us, yet these words in the mouth of the apostle mean, that Abel still speaks by his example for our instruction. The inquisition made by God after the blood of His righteous servant, demonstrates the care which Jehovah takes of His people. It proclaims that the death of the saints is precious in God's sight, and that persecutors shall by no means be allowed to go unpunished. Abel's faith and integrity are held up in Scripture as examples to us, from which we may derive much instruction and encouragement. That something like this is the apostle's idea, is confirmed by the consideration, that his whole object in this chapter is to exhibit to the Hebrews the example of ancient believers, that they might be stirred up to resist every temptation, and to persevere, amid all dangers, in holding faith and a good conscience.

The passage in Genesis relating to the blood of Abel is regarded by Philo as furnishing a proof of the immortality of the soul. The argument does not appear to be one of very decided conclusiveness. Yet, when we remember that the words were spoken by God Himself, and that Christ also infers from the phrase, "the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob,"

that these patriarchs were still alive, God being "the God of the living, and not of the dead" (Luke xx. 38), the inference does not appear altogether destitute of force.

Ver. 5. The next example adduced by the apostle is that of Enoch: *πίστει Ἐνὼχ μετετέθη*—By faith Enoch was translated. Faith is here exhibited as the reason on account of which Enoch's translation took place. His extraordinary removal from the scenes of earth was the reward of his steady and consistent piety. The words employed in Genesis to describe his case are these, *וַיִּתְּנֵהוּ אֱלֹהִים בְּרֵלָקָה אֶתְחַבֵּל אֶתְחַבֵּל* (Gen. v. 24), which are thus rendered in the Septuagint, *καὶ εὐηρέστησεν Ἐνὼχ τῷ Θεῷ, καὶ οὐχ εὗρίσκειτο, ὅτι μετέθηκεν αὐτὸν ὁ Θεός*; and the language of the apostle is moulded upon that of the Septuagint. Herder, Michaelis, Dindorf, maintain that the words in Genesis do not imply anything miraculous in the mode of Enoch's removal; for, when a pious man dies, he is *taken* by God, and he is no more to be found upon earth; and they remind us that similar language is employed where no doubt can exist that death has taken place, as in Isa. lii. 5, Jer. xv. 15, Ezek. xxxiii. 4. Nay, Dindorf and others maintain, that even Elijah was not translated alive, but was struck dead by lightning, which led the sacred penman to represent him as transported to heaven in a chariot of fire. But with regard to Elijah's case, it admits of no doubt whatever, unless the most arbitrary liberties be taken with the words of Scripture, that he was miraculously taken away from this world, and had no experience of death. And although the account that is given of Enoch's end is more brief and bare, yet, keeping the fuller statements made with regard to Elijah in view, we are naturally guided to the conclusion, that he too was carried off alive to glory. Of each of the other patriarchs mentioned in the chapter of Genesis under consideration, it is said, "and he died;" but nothing of the kind is stated with respect to Enoch: it is only said, "He was not, he was not found; for God took him." Then, again, it must be remembered that Enoch was taken away from this world at a far earlier age than any of the other patriarchs; and this apparently premature removal was due to his extraordinary piety. But nowhere in Scripture is early death represented as a reward. Quite an opposite view was taken by the ancients,

who rather considered long life and prosperity as the true tokens of Heaven's favour. The wicked might not live half their days; but it would have seemed an absurdity to make the same doom a proof of extraordinary excellence. All the circumstances of the narrative, therefore, guide us to the conclusion, that Enoch was supernaturally lifted up from this earth like Elijah, and entered into glory without tasting of death. And there is no question that this was the view taken of the passage by the ancient Jews, as appears from Onkelos, Jonathan, and the Targum of Jerusalem, where it is affirmed that the Lord did not cause him to die, but carried him up aloft by the word of the Lord. In the Wisdom of Sirach, too, it is said regarding him, ἀνελήφθη ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς.

But even although the passage in Genesis were less clear than it is, still the authority of the apostle would be decisive in regard to the fact of Enoch's having been translated alive from this world; for while he employs the same verb that is used in the Septuagint, μετέθηκεν, he adds the clause, τοῦ μὴ ἰδεῖν θάνατον. Now, to see death just means to die, as in Luke ii. 26, where it is stated that Simeon was not to see death, μὴ ἰδεῖν θάνατον, until he had seen the Lord's Christ. Drusius, indeed, and Herder, and Michaelis, imagine that the phrase is here used tropically with respect to spiritual death or wretchedness; but this idea is utterly foreign to the scope of the passage. The genitive of the infinitive sometimes expresses design, and sometimes mere result. The latter seems to be the force of it here, so as not to see death, it being common for verbs of removal to be followed by a genitive of this kind.

Καὶ οὐχ εὗρίσκετο, διότι μετέθηκεν αὐτὸν ὁ Θεός. These words are a quotation from the Septuagint, with a slight change of conjunction only. He was not found, that is, upon the earth. Body and soul were rapt away to be with God. Search, we know, was made for Elijah after his translation, over mountain and valley, but no trace of him could be found; and the searchers were reproved for their folly (2 Kings ii. 17). Whether similar investigation was made after Enoch, we know not; but this we know, that he was where no human hands could find him.

What follows in this verse and in ver. 6 is designed as a

proof of the justice of the statement already made, that it was by faith Enoch was translated. There is no mention made of faith in the passage in Genesis. It is only said that Enoch walked with God; and in the Septuagint, that he pleased God. The apostle, however, argues, that without faith it is impossible to please God; and thus he justifies his representation, that it was by faith Enoch was translated. Πῶς δὲ πίστει μετετέθη ὁ Ἐνὼχ; ὅτι τῆς μεταθέσεως ἡ εὐαρέστησις αἰτία, τῆς δὲ εὐαρεσθήσεως ἡ πίστις Chrysost. Gerhard, Bengel, and Stuart, connect πρὸ τῆς μεταθέσεως with εὐηρεστηκέναι, "that before his translation he pleased God;" and the perfect tense, μεμαρτύρηται, seems at first sight to require this sort of construction. The actual arrangement of the words, however, rather favours the idea that μεταθέσεως and μεμαρτύρηται are to be thrown together: "before his translation it is testified." In this view, the sense of μεμαρτύρηται must be viewed as having reference to the order of the narrative in Genesis. Before mention is made of his translation, testimony is borne to his character. Μεμαρτύρηται does not describe, as the English version would indicate, a communication made from God to Enoch whilst he was on earth. To express this idea, the historic aorist would have been needed, or the imperfect, to set it forth in connection with the past event of the translation. But the perfect, μεμαρτύρηται, refers to the testimony borne in Scripture, which continues down to the present moment. It is recorded of Enoch, that "he walked with God," and pleased God. He led a holy and religious life. His whole conduct was influenced by a regard to the divine will. He acknowledged God in all his ways. He chose God for his companion, for the guide of his life, for the end and aim of all his actions. Whether he went in or out, he realized the fact that God was near. To walk with God, is to walk as seeing God, as fearing God, as having respect to the will of God. And Enoch, too, stood up, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, as a witness for God. He justified the ways of providence to man, and denounced the wrath of God against all ungodliness and sin. Jude tells us that he said, "Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly

deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him" (Jude 14, 15).

Ver. 6. *Χωρὶς δὲ πίστεως ἀδύνατον εὐαρεσθῆσαι.* Limborch, Wetstein, and Schulz view this clause as pointing specifically to Enoch. Without a doubt, however, it enunciates a general principle, which is exhibited as a step in the argument. It is a self-evident maxim. The greatest insult you can offer to a fellow-mortal is to question his word; whilst, on the other hand, to receive his testimony with confidence is felt as doing him honour. And if we may receive with credit the testimony of our fellow-men in regard to points which fall within their knowledge, much more dependence may we place upon God in all matters about which He is pleased to make any communication to us. Without faith it is impossible to please God; nay, without faith it is impossible to please any being with whom we are brought into contact.

Τὸν προσερχόμενον has been supposed to designate an individual approaching into God's presence, as Enoch did when taken away from this world—in short, an entrant into glory. But it admits of no reasonable doubt that the phrase does not describe entrance on the enjoyment of reward, but employment in the service of God on earth. The word is similarly used in chap. iv. 16, vii. 25, x. 1, in all which it refers to approach into the presence of God in the various services and duties of religion. Now the apostle declares that every one who thus engages in the service of God must necessarily be conceived as having faith, otherwise his whole religion must be a falsehood and a lie.

Two points are mentioned by the apostle as necessary to be believed regarding God. The first is, *ὅτι ἔστιν*, that He is. This is the only passage of Scripture where a statement is made with regard to the simple existence of God. In all other passages that existence is presupposed. There is one passage, too, where the idea of God's non-existence is exhibited as a demonstration of folly: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." The belief of a supreme intelligence is almost instinctive in the human breast. Footprints of the Deity force themselves upon our notice in every department of nature.

Sun, moon, and stars proclaim the existence of a great and glorious Being, who made and continually upholds them. Men do not need to reason themselves into this belief; they rather need to reason themselves out of it. What laborious efforts are made by many, when they have abandoned themselves to evil courses, to bring themselves to the persuasion that there is no superior being to whom they lie under responsibility, who can ever call them in question for their conduct! Atheism originates in man's wickedness. It is the refuge to which the sinful heart vainly flees for escape from the vengeance which is felt to be due.

The second point needful to be believed is, that God is the righteous governor of the world: *καὶ τοῖς ἐκζητοῦσιν αὐτὸν μισθαποδότης γίνεται*. A bare belief in the existence of God will not produce all those religious sentiments which it is requisite we should feel. We must be persuaded that God takes an interest in His creatures, that He has pleasure in promoting their good, and that He will bestow rewards upon all who are faithful in serving Him. Now, although reason might suggest plentiful arguments in proof of the goodness and beneficence of God, yet it could never have ascertained beyond question whether He would be gracious to sinners, whether He would readmit them into His favour, whether there was any way in which He could do this consistently with His holy character. These are questions which God alone could solve, and we have His solution in the Scriptures. There it is pointed out to us how sinners may have access to God, how the most guilty may seek His favour with the certainty of finding it. And in order to our finding God, and obtaining blessings from His gracious hand, it is indispensable that we believe what He has told us Himself as to the way of seeking Him. *Ἐκζητέω* does not mean, in the clause before us, to search out, to investigate, as if the reference were to persons who sought out arguments in proof of the existence and government of God; but it means to seek God with the view of obtaining His favour, to worship Him, to serve Him. The phrase before us is formed after the model of the Hebrew *שָׁרַשׁ אֶת־אֱלֹהִים*, which signifies to worship God, to serve Him piously and faithfully (Ps. xiv. 2, xxiv. 6; Isa. lxx. 10).

Vers. 7-10. The next example of faith adduced by the

apostle is that of Noah: *πίστει χρηματισθεὶς Νῶε*. Wittich and Schulz connect *πίστει* with *χρηματισθεὶς*, as if the meaning were, warned by faith, or on account of his faith; but there can be no reasonable doubt that *πίστει* stands related to *κατεσκεύασεν*: Being warned, and believing the warning, he constructed an ark. No doubt it was on account of Noah's previous piety and faith that a communication was made to him rather than to any other, in regard to the approaching flood (Gen. vi. 9); but the object of the apostle here is not to account for the warning given to Noah, but to show how that warning, being received in faith, issued in his preservation. *Χρηματίζω* signifies to utter an oracle, and in the passive to receive an oracle, to be admonished from on high; and *χρηματισθεὶς* refers to the divine communication described in Gen. vi. 13, 14, which was the ground of that faith that led Noah to prepare the ark. The subject of God's communication to Noah is exhibited in the following clause: *περὶ τῶν μηδέπω βλεπομένων*—concerning things not yet seen. These words are obviously selected with reference to the description of faith in ver. 1; and the things here meant are the bursting up of the fountains of the great deep, the opening of the windows of heaven, and the consequent submersion of the earth under the waters of a desolating flood. Behme supposes that the words *μηδέπω βλεπομένων* denote things never yet seen, the like of which had never happened before. But although it is quite true that such a catastrophe as the flood had never hitherto befallen the human race, still this is not the idea here expressed. The words simply mean, that the things spoken of were future. It is not necessary to faith, that its objects be things altogether unprecedented: they may be so, or they may not. It is enough that to us they be unseen; and this is all that is here stated with regard to Noah and the flood. It was a future event, and there were no natural indications from which the likelihood of it could be inferred. Our Lord, illustrating the principle that the kingdom of God cometh not with observation, first declares that His own coming shall be like lightning darting from one part of the sky to another, and then mentions the flood as a parallel case: "They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood

came and destroyed them all" (Luke xvii. 27). Nature pursued her wonted course down to the very period when the waters of the deluge began to flow. Yet Noah's faith remained unshaken. For one hundred and twenty long years he continued toiling at the construction of the ark. And we can readily conceive that his labours would afford matter for endless derision to his unbelieving neighbours. Many a jest would be hurled at the ark and its deluded fabricator. Noah's faith stood a long and severe trial, and was thus shown to be of the right stamp.

Εὐλαβηθεὶς has been variously interpreted. Luther, Zegerus, J. Capellus, Kuinoel, Bretschneider, understand it in the sense of fearing God; but it has been well remarked by Bleek, that in this case *τὸν Θεὸν* could hardly have been omitted. Bœhme and De Wette view the word as referring to the pious awe with which the communication from the invisible world filled the mind of Noah, and impelled him to take the steps that were indicated. This is not materially different from the common view, which makes the flood the object of the fear. Theophylact says: *ἡὐλαβήθη τὸν κατακλυσμὸν*. Still it must be remembered that this verb expresses the idea of fear only under a peculiar aspect. It does not mean bare terror and alarm, like *φοβέω*. In fact, the two may be contrasted, as in the following passage of Diogenes Laertes (lvii. 116): *τὴν δ' εὐλάβειαν ἐναντίαν φησὶν εἶναι τῷ φόβῳ οὗσαν εὐλογον ἐκκλίσιν φοβηθήσεσθαι μὲν γὰρ τὸν σοφὸν οὐδαμῶς, εὐλαβηθήσεσθαι δέ*. Fear is not the predominating idea expressed in *εὐλαβέομαι*. It rather indicates such an apprehension of coming evils as leads to prudent efforts for warding them off. Careful handling is the etymological sense of the word—such a cautious seizure of an object as may not expose it to the risk of being broken; and therefore, when it is rendered by the word fear, it is always to be understood of a cautious and considerate fear (see Acts xxiii. 10). Here, therefore, Erasmus translates it *cavens*. Our marginal rendering is, "being wary;" Ebrard, "with wise foresight;" Bleek, "with praiseworthy foresight." Noah believed what was communicated to him; and being filled with a salutary fear of the approaching judgment, he proceeded to construct an ark to the saving of his house.

Δι' ἧς κατέκρινε τὸν κόσμον. What is the antecedent to *ἧς*?

Chrysostom, Theophylact, Calvin, Beza, Grotius, Michaelis, Ernesti, and others, say *κεβωτόν*; but the great objection to this reference is, that although it would be quite suitable to the first of the two clauses which conclude the verse, it would not at all harmonize with the second. It might be said that by the ark Noah condemned the world, but it could scarcely be said that by the ark he became an heir of righteousness. It admits of no reasonable doubt, therefore, that *πλῆται* is the antecedent to *ἡς*; and this is the view taken by the great bulk of interpreters, particularly in later times. Noah's faith condemned the world, inasmuch as by contrast it exhibited the more prominently the faithlessness of all around him. He was a preacher of righteousness; he warned his fellow-men of the approaching judgment of Heaven; he admonished them to immediate repentance; but his words seemed to them as idle tales, and they heeded them not. His faith, therefore, manifested in long-continued labours upon the ark, and continually disregarded appeals to the ungodly, left them altogether without excuse. The excellence of one individual exposes the faults of another, just as light beaming out from one region of the sky gives a blacker and more threatening aspect to a dark thunder-cloud in the opposite heavens. The same use of *κατακρίνειν* is to be found in Matt. xii. 41, 42, where our Lord declares that "the men of Nineveh should rise up in the judgment against the men of his generation, and should condemn them, for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here."

By his faith, too, Noah became heir of righteousness. In Gen. vi. 9, the epithet *πῦξ* is expressly applied to him; and Philo draws attention to the fact that he is the first individual who is so designated in Scripture. Now the apostle affirms that the righteousness of Noah was a righteousness grounded not upon works, but upon faith. Moses does not analyze it, or trace it up to its seminal principle; but the apostle does. Not only does he affirm that by faith Noah became possessed of righteousness, but he also designates that righteousness *τῆς κατὰ πλῆτην δικαιοσύνης*. This phrase, it is obvious, is employed as designating a well-known idea; and what can that idea be, but the Pauline doctrine of the righteousness that is by faith? De Wette denies this, on the ground that not *ἐκ*, but *κατά*, is here

employed. He does not state, however, very clearly what idea different from Paul's he supposes to be indicated in this verse, and his argument grounded upon the preposition used is feeble. The fact is, that even in Romans Paul's idea is variously expressed. We find the genitive *πίστεως* without any preposition, as in Rom. iv. 11, 13; we find *διὰ τῆς πίστεως*, as in Rom. iii. 25; we find the dative *πίστει*, as in Rom. iii. 28; and we have *ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει* in Phil. iii. 9. The mere want of *ἐκ*, therefore, proves nothing. All the different forms which have been mentioned express the same idea of a righteousness not grounded upon works, but upon faith; and it is difficult to see what other idea can be intended in the words before. *Τῆς κατὰ πίστιν δικαιοσύνης* must mean the righteousness which is according to faith. Some contend that it was simply the belief of the approaching flood which made Noah righteous before God, and constituted the ground of his eternal salvation, as well as of his rescue from the waters that drowned the world. There would be some plausible ground for this idea, if no mention were made in Genesis of a Saviour prior to the time of Noah. But the great evangelical promise had already been given, that the seed of the woman, at the expense of suffering to Himself, should crush the serpent, and thus repair the ruin of the fall. Doubtless this promise was known to Noah, and constituted the ground of his piety. And it was because he was a pious man, living in the joyful belief of the promise, that God made known to him his purpose of desolating the earth with a flood; and because he had already experienced God's gracious presence, he gave implicit credit to the startling intelligence, and with heaven-directed foresight made preparation for the catastrophe. The belief of the flood was not Noah's first act of faith. On the contrary, we are first informed that Noah was a just man, and perfect in his generation, and walked with God; and afterwards it is declared that God made known to him His purpose (Gen. vi. 9-14), and provided for his deliverance. The faith of the flood implied a prior and more fundamental faith in Noah, and could not otherwise have existed. Why were not others warned as well as Noah, and why did not others believe when this preacher of righteousness (2 Pet. ii. 5) told them what was coming? Because they were living in revolt against God, and

had no faith in him. The faith of the flood was not the only or the leading faith of Noah. It was a special act, proceeding from a principle already in vigorous exercise, whose main ground was the promise of the seed of the woman. If Noah had not had this faith, he no more than the rest of mankind would have been warned of the flood. But already believing God, he experienced the truth of the great principle, To him that hath shall be given. And as the divine communication in reference to the deluge was made to him, because he was a believing and pious man, so, when the predicted ruin came, it would be the means of confirming his faith in that higher promise on which he had leaned all his days. And he would look upon the ark and the salvation attained through it as but types and emblems of that higher and greater salvation which he had trustingly hoped for before he heard of the flood at all (1 Pet. iii. 20, 21).

Ver. 8. The next example of faith adduced by the apostle is that of Abraham : *πίστει καλούμενος Ἀβραὰμ ὑπήκουσεν ἐξελθεῖν*. There are two readings of this clause, some authorities exhibiting the article in connection with *καλούμενος*, and others not. According to the one reading, the meaning would be, he that was designated Abraham, reference being made to the fact that at an earlier period he bore the name of Abram. According to the other, the thing meant is, that Abraham received a call from God while he was in his native land. The external authorities are pretty strong on both sides,—J, K, Coptic, Syriac, Chrysostom, J. Damascenus, and many others, omitting it; while A, D, Theodoret, Jerome, Vulgate, and others, insert it. Griesbach and Tischendorf adhere to the received reading *καλούμενος*, but Lachmann prefixes the article. The internal evidence, however, is altogether opposed to the presence of the article. The change of Abraham's name took place at a later period than is here referred to, and with no propriety could be mentioned in this place. On the other hand, it was Abraham's obedience to the call which he received from God while in Ur of the Chaldees, which constituted the evidence of his faith, and was the first great exercise of it (Gen. xii. 1–4). God gave promises to Abraham, and invited him to leave his native land; and Abraham, thus called, believed and obeyed. Whether is *ἐξελθεῖν* governed by *καλούμενος* or *ὑπήκουσεν*? Both constructions

bring out the very same sense. The connection with *καλούμενος* would be more simple, but the arrangement of the words seems to require that the infinitive be made dependent upon *ὑπήκουσεν*. This is one of those cases where the infinitive is exegetical of the governing verb. The meaning is the same as if *ὥστε* or *εἰς τὸ* were inserted. The clause *ὃν ἤμελλε λαμβάνειν εἰς κληρονομίαν* is added, to exhibit the ground of Abraham's faith. The place to which he was invited was to be given him for an inheritance. This was promised by God, and believed by Abraham. The last clause, *καὶ ἐξῆλθε μὴ ἐπιστάμενος ποῦ ἔρχεται*, brings into view still more strikingly the strength of the patriarch's faith. He knew not whither he was going. He did not receive the specific promise of the land of Canaan till he actually reached it. What was promised in Ur was, that God would make of him a great nation, which of course implied a fixed and permanent place of abode. But the precise spot was not indicated. He knew nothing of the region. He was ignorant of its situation, and size, and features. It was enough to him that he had God's command. He felt assured the promise would be fulfilled, and he was also persuaded that the land would be a suitable one, being what God willed him to possess. To whom better than to God could he entrust himself and all his interests? And the faith of Abraham will appear the more remarkable, if we consider how different the condition of the world was in those ages from what it is now. There was little communication between different regions. There were no such means of intercourse as now exist. A distant journey was a perilous undertaking. Yet Abraham scrupled not at the call of God to leave home, and kindred, and friends, and to set out for a perpetuity in search of a place which was utterly unknown to him, and which he could not reach without encountering many hardships, and trials, and dangers. What a bright exhibition of faith was this! The patriarch's maxim was, Go where God and duty call. And the same maxim should be ours. True, we have no such specific promises and personal invitations as Abraham received; but we have the general promises of Scripture, and we know that God's providence controls and regulates all events. He fixes the bounds of our habitation, and prescribes the length of our days. Confiding trust in Him,

therefore, is our duty, and entire submission to His will. Our plans and purposes should all be formed with reference to Him; and whilst we employ such means as experience and prudence may suggest, we should be prepared for such issues as His overruling providence may bring out. We plan, but God disposes; and cheerful acquiescence in His appointment is the exercise of faith which Abraham's example enforces upon us, as alike the course of duty, and safety, and comfort.

Ver. 9. Another illustration of Abraham's faith is taken from a later period of his life. Not only was faith requisite to induce him to leave his native country, but he had occasion also for the exercise of it after he reached the land of Canaan. Not unnaturally might he have expected that, after having come so far, he would receive immediate possession of the promised inheritance; but he only received the assurance that this was the land destined for his posterity. To him it continued but the land of promise—*γῆν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας*; it belonged to others—*ὡς ἀλλοτρίαν*. This postponement of the promised blessing was a new trial of Abraham's faith, but it passed triumphantly through the ordeal. He cherished the unfaltering persuasion that, however long deferred, the promise would undoubtedly be realized. *Πίστει παρέμεινεν εἰς τὴν γῆν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας*—by faith he sojourned in the land of promise. *Εἰς* is here used in the same sense as *ἐν*, and there are many examples of this; but it will generally be noticed, that in such cases the idea of previous entrance is not obscurely suggested. See Matt. ii. 23; Acts vii. 4; 1 Pet. iii. 20. Here, too, Abraham's faith stands forth as a bright example to us. Not only, like him, should we believe all that the Lord promises, but we should patiently wait when cherished hopes are deferred. Our trust in God's providence should never falter. Clouds and darkness may gather round us. Earthly objects, for which we have planned and laboured, may never come into our possession, or they may be soon torn from our grasp; but our faith must continue stable as a rock. The only possession which Abraham obtained in the land of Canaan was a burial-place, which might not unnaturally have seemed a death-blow to his hopes; and soon all that any of us shall be able to occupy in this world will be a grave. But in life and in death, under hopes realized and hopes disappointed, we must

place entire confidence in God; and so shall we experience the serene joy which ever filled the bosom of Abraham, of whom it is declared by Christ Himself, that he rejoiced, and was glad.

The clause *ἐν σκηναῖς κατοικήσας* is added in illustration of the fact that it was as a sojourner only that Abraham dwelt in Canaan. He reared not stable structures. He built not cities. This, of course, is not adduced as a direct and separate proof of his faith. It illustrates his faith only in so far as that appears from his position as a sojourner. *Μετὰ Ἰσαὰκ καὶ Ἰακώβ, κ.τ.λ.* This whole clause stands connected with *κατοικήσας*. The son and grandson of Abraham dwelt with him in tents, and they lived so after his death. Not to them, any more than to Abraham, was the promise of Canaan fulfilled, although it belonged to them as much as to him, for it could only be fulfilled to him in being fulfilled to them. They were heirs or possessors of the same promise; for it was given expressly to Abraham, and to his seed after him.

Ver. 10. This verse brings into view a third and the principal proof of Abraham's faith. His faith was shown in leaving his native country, to obtain a promised possession in another land. It was also shown in that other land, in his continuing to sojourn as a stranger. But the brightest display of it was made in his looking forward to another world. *Ἐξεδέχετο γὰρ τὴν τοὺς θεμελίους ἔχουσιν πόλιν.* The city here meant is the new Jerusalem, the spiritual residence of the blessed. Grotius, Sykes, Dindorf, and others, conceive that reference is made to some city in Palestine, and that the patriarch's hope was realized when his posterity obtained possession of the city of David. For the time he was content to dwell in tents, but by and by he expected that he or his posterity would be able to build a city, and assume something like the appearance of a settled nation. But this idea is utterly opposed to the whole structure and language of the verse. The expected city is described as one having foundations, that is, as stable and enduring. Now, no doubt this might be said of Jerusalem as compared with tents; but it is much more applicable to the new Jerusalem, which is never to be shaken. But the second part of the description shuts out all doubt whatsoever; for it is added, *ἥς τεχνίτης καὶ δημιουργὸς ὁ Θεός*, whose builder and maker is God. *Δημιουργὸς* occurs

nowhere else in the New Testament, nor at all in the Septuagint, and but once in the Apocrypha (2 Macc. iv. 1). It is frequent, however, in the Greek writers, by whom it is applied to any kind of workman; and in the later Greek it is used as a common designation of God, as Creator of the universe. Now, what kind of city must that be which has God Himself for its founder? We have seen already that the apostle places fabrication by man in opposition to fabrication by God, and things made with hands are distinguished from the works of God (chap. viii. 2, ix. 11, 24). The city, therefore, which Abraham expected was not one reared by art or man's device; it was not of this world, it was in heaven.

This is a verse of great importance. It shows that Abraham's faith did not merely look to future temporal blessings, but to blessings beyond this earthly scene. The expectation of these was the soul of his faith. In Genesis, however, there is mention made of no land but Canaan in the promise. It follows, therefore, indubitably, that the earthly Canaan, in accordance with the typical and symbolical mode of exhibition so common in ancient times, must have been so presented to Abraham, that he was enabled to recognise in it a type of the heavenly world. What God said with regard to an earthly settlement, he must have understood as referring both to an earthly and a heavenly inheritance. And in this view the postponement of the earthly blessing acquires a striking significance. It not only tried Abraham's faith, but also became the means of confirming it. For having the conviction that God had spoken to him, and made him promises, he would feel, the more the earthly blessings were deferred, the deeper persuasion that the principal reference of God's words must have been to another state of being. If the promised earthly possessions had come to him at once, he might have been tempted to imagine that they exhausted the promise. His residence as a stranger in Canaan would make him more and more sensible that something not yet visible was wrapped up in God's words, and thus a spirit of patient waiting would be exercised.

And then, again, with regard to Abraham's posterity, who had not the same personal knowledge of the fact of the promise as himself, the postponement of the earthly part of the blessing

would in the end acquire a convincing and confirming power; for when they saw it come after years of waiting, they would feel the persuasion that the more ethereal blessing which they had been taught to view as enclosed and wrapped up also in the promise, although from its nature not capable of being seen by them here, would certainly be bestowed in the future world. When two things are promised together, a visible and an invisible, an earlier and a later, the bestowment of the visible and the earlier becomes a pledge that the other also shall in due season be conferred. A proof of the same kind we find in our Lord's curing the palsied man, to make it apparent that His power of forgiving sins was not a vain claim.

It has been maintained by many, that the Old Testament does not embrace the slightest reference to a future state, that the ancient saints knew nothing at all of immortality or of heaven, and that all the sanctions and promises which were addressed to them were purely of an earthly kind. This idea stands in direct contradiction to the verse before us, and also to what is said in ver. 16, and in chap. xii. 22, 28, xiii. 14. And those who maintain this view are guilty of overlooking the process by which abstract and spiritual ideas are generated in the mind. At first men's notions are altogether sensuous. To them the concrete alone exists, the abstract is quite unknown. Outward and visible things are the only vehicles through which it is possible to impart ideas. Hence language at first is wholly taken up with what is material and sensible; and hence, too, the universal prevalence of parabolical, and typical, and symbolical instruction. Now, in the Pentateuch we have a record of the means whereby God trained His ancient people, and gradually laid a foundation for the evolution of ideas which are now clearly exhibited under the gospel. By washings and separations, and setting objects apart to certain uses, the ideas of purity, and holiness, and dedication to God were evoked. Now, we can conceive these and similar ideas, and speak of them, quite irrespectively of those earthly and visible adjuncts; and forgetting that it was not possible to do so at first, we hastily draw the conclusion that the ideas themselves must have been utterly unknown, because not expressed in the same manner as now, and we reduce the symbolical exhibition of them to a mere

description of earthly things. The earthly Canaan promised to Abraham was designed to awaken the idea of a heavenly land; and the circumstance that he remained a stranger and a sojourner in it all his days, would oblige him, unless he relinquished his faith, to conclude that there was more in the promise than met the ear. But we now have the ideas of immortality and a heavenly country, quite irrespectively of any promise of an earthly Canaan: therefore we will have it, that the promise of a country to Abraham was never anything more than the promise of so many acres of land! Just as rationally might the builder, who has employed a scaffolding to aid him in raising an edifice, when he has reached the summit and laid the last stone, throw down the scaffolding and maintain that it never had any connection with the building at all, nor was calculated to suggest the idea of anything beyond itself.

Vers. 11-16. The next example adduced by the apostle is that of Sarah: *πιστεὶ καὶ αὐτῇ Σάρρα*. The force of *αὐτῇ* has been differently estimated. Chrysostom, Theophylact, Bengel, Bœhme, suppose the reference to be to her sex: Sarah, although a woman. But there are other examples of women mentioned in this chapter, as in vers. 31, 35, without any such note of surprise or depreciation. Nor is it a fact that the gentler sex are in general less disposed than men to believe and trust in God. Perhaps the reverse is rather the case. There have been multitudes of pious women in all ages. What conspicuous examples of female devotedness illustrated the commencement of the Christian era! Who ministered to Christ of their substance? Who stood near the cross with sympathizing hearts when He was suffering? Who watched where His body was laid? And who were earliest at the holy sepulchre on the first day of the week? Schulz conceives the reference of *αὐτῇ* to be to Sarah's barrenness; and, in fact, D and some other authorities read *στεῖρα* or *ἡ στεῖρα* or *στεῖρα οὖσα*. Now, this reference would admit of no doubt, if Sarah's faith were strongly stated in the Old Testament, and no shadow had ever dimmed its lustre. But at first she disbelieved the promise; and we are told that she laughed at the idea of her ever having a son (Gen. xviii. 12). Her incredulity, however, was not deep-seated or abiding. On being reproved by the angel, and receiving an additional

assurance from the angel, she gave credit to the divine promise. The most probable reference of *αὐτῇ*, therefore, is to the first unbelief of Sarah, and it must be conceived as forming a kind of contrast with *πίστεις*. The apostle's great object is to exhibit the value of faith, and to show that, without it, it is impossible to please God; and it conduces to his purpose, to mention that even Sarah, although disbelieving for a time, yet, before the promise was fulfilled, came to place entire confidence in it. No doubt her age and barrenness were what occasioned her temporary unbelief, and they also shed a lustre upon the faith which in the end she was enabled to cherish; and in this way there may be a subordinate reference to them in the word *αὐτῇ*, but the principal reference of this word is to the unbelief which preceded Sarah's faith.

Sarah received strength *εἰς καταβολὴν σπέρματος*. Chrysostom, Œcumenius, Erasmus, Calvin, Grotius, Bengel, Carpzov, and others, understand these words to mean, for the conception of seed, as if they were equivalent to *εἰς ὑποδοχὴν σπέρματος*. The Vulgate renders them, *in conceptionem seminis*; Œcumenius, *εἰς τὸ ὑποδέξασθαι παιδοποιὸν σπέρμα*. But this view does not at all comport with the ordinary usage of the words. Both verb and noun are frequently applied to the sowing of seed, but they always describe the act of the sower, and not the ground viewed as receiving the seed. So, when applied to the generation of children, they are always used with reference to the male parent, and not the female. And it is only by very violent and forced constructions that some interpreters succeed in applying them to Sarah. Heinrichs, Dindorf, and Wahl, view them as equivalent to *εἰς τὸ ἐκδέχεσθαι τὸ σπέρμα καταβεβημένον εἰς τὴν μήτραν*. And Michaelis and Storr, dissatisfied with this arbitrary reconstruction of the phrase, prefer to read *αὐτῇ Σάρρα* as a dative, and supply "Abraham" from the preceding sentence as the nominative to *ἔλαβε*. Both these constructions are unnatural, and to no small extent indecent.

Quite a different view of the clause is taken by Ernesti, Böhme, Kuinöl, De Wette, Bretschneider, Bleek. They understand *σπέρματος* in the sense of offspring, which is a thoroughly accredited scriptural meaning; and, in fact, the most common examples of it are to be found in Gal. iii. 16, 17,

Heb. ii. 16, xi. 18. So, in Gen. iv. 25, Seth is designated *σπέρμα ἕτερον*. Then, again, *καταβολήν* is taken in the sense of foundation or founding, as in Heb. iv. 3, ix. 26, Eph. i. 4, 2 Macc. ii. 30. And consequently the whole phrase is understood to mean, for the founding of a family. A similar expression is quoted by Bleek from Plutarch, *Vit. M. Anton.* p. 932: *πολλὰς γεννῶν ἀρχὰς καὶ καταβολάς*. This rendering is decidedly to be preferred, as neither departing from the approved signification of the words, nor requiring any arbitrary additions to them.

The clause *καὶ παρὰ καιρὸν ἡλικίας* is added, to exhibit the ultimate strength of Sarah's faith; and it describes a natural obstacle to her becoming the mother of children. The received text inserts *ἔτεκεν* after *ἡλικίας*; but this addition has been very generally expunged by critics. There is a preponderance of authority against it; and it is difficult to see how, if it originally stood in the text, it should have fallen out; whereas the insertion of it is very easily accounted for. If the word be retained, the meaning is obvious. If it be omitted, then the whole clause is dependent upon *ἔλαβε*: "she received strength for the founding of a family, and that although past the time of child-bearing." *Καιρὸς* denotes season, fitting time; *ἡλικία* means period of life, being sometimes applied to old age, more generally to maturity, and also specially to marriageable age. Here the whole phrase undoubtedly signifies, beyond the season of fresh vigour. The last clause is epexegetic of *πίστει*, "for she judged Him faithful that promised" (see at chap. x. 23).

Ver. 12. *Διὸ* refers to Sarah's faith in the promise that she should become a mother. Abraham's faith as to this point is presupposed. *Ἐνὸς* refers to Abraham, and stands in contrast with the innumerable multitude of his descendants described in the concluding part of the verse. This contrast is made still more striking by the clause, *καὶ ταῦτα νεκρωμένου*—he was not merely but one, but he was also in a certain sense dead. His days of vigour were gone. The same word is employed in Rom. iv. 19 to describe both the physical incapacity of the patriarch, and also of Sarah his wife. They were both disabled by the infirmities of age, and Sarah, moreover, had always been barren. *Ταῦτα* is rendered by some, "as to these things,"

viz. procreation. But *καὶ ταῦτα* is frequently used, as in 1 Cor. vi. 8, adverbially in the sense of "and that too:" one, and that a dead man—one, and him, too, disabled by age. For *ἐγεννήθησαν*, the received reading, many authorities exhibit *ἐγενήθησαν*, which is adopted by Lachmann, Bleek, and others. The former reading, it is said, would require to be translated "were begotten by one." The preposition *ἀπό*, however, does not suit this idea. In this sense, too, the word would more naturally describe immediate offspring, though it might also refer to remoter descendants. Bleek contends that the use of *ἀπὸ* obliges us to refer *ἐγεννήθησαν*, not to the act of the male in begetting, but to that of the female in bringing forth. This, however, is not necessary; for while *γεννάω* signifies specifically to beget and to bring forth, it also denotes generally to produce; and therefore here the rendering may be, "were produced from one," which may designate either immediate or remoter descendants. The other reading, which perhaps is the preferable one, can only be rendered in this way. The rendering of our version is exceedingly good, "sprang."

Ἐγεννήθησαν has no nominative expressed; but obviously the one to be supplied is posterity, descendants. And the apostle, in setting forth the number of those who sprang from the one individual mentioned, uses the language employed by God Himself in giving the promise to Abraham: "In blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore" (Gen. xxii. 17; see also Gen. xiii. 16, xv. 5). The same figures are frequently employed in Scripture, and they give a most striking view of the prodigious multitude of Abraham's posterity. Who can enumerate the stars that sparkle in the firmament of heaven? Every accession to the power of the telescope brings countless multitudes of new stars into view. Who can count the particles of sand that are scattered upon the sea-shore? The very attempt to sum them up would be a proof of insanity. So does it utterly transcend the ability of man to ascertain the number of Abraham's posterity. This holds true of those descended from Abraham according to the flesh, and it is equally true of those who are his spiritual seed. Continual augmentations are taking place from age to age of the number who pos-

ness like precious faith with faithful Abraham. And we have reason to believe, that as time advances, the accessions to the body of believers will become progressively more numerous, until, where there are hundreds at present, there shall be thousands and millions. And when all the faithful of all ages and dispensations are collected together before the throne of God, the number will be vast beyond our power of conception. "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands" (Rev. vii. 9). It was a great privilege to belong to the posterity of Abraham, chiefly because "that unto them were committed the oracles of God, and to them pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises" (Rom. iii. 2, ix. 4). But it is an infinitely greater privilege to belong to the spiritual Israel. Indeed, the temporal privilege was of value only as tending to secure the spiritual. If we have faith, then we are more nearly and indissolubly related to Abraham, than if his blood were flowing in our veins. The spiritual seed of Abraham are those who inherit the promises in their highest amplitude of range, and in the only way in which Abraham himself obtained their fulfilment. The patriarch's posterity according to the flesh received possession of Canaan; but those who are the children of promise are to obtain the Canaan that is above. The father of the faithful himself was nothing but a sojourner in the land of promise. He continued a stranger and a pilgrim all his days; but he was happy in the thought that the promise would be fulfilled to him in its most glorious significancy, when he entered into the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Thus only was the promise fulfilled to Abraham, and thus certainly shall it be fulfilled to every one that believes. The temporal blessings of the covenant may be wrested from individuals. The Jews have long since been expelled for their sins from the land that was given to their fathers. But none who once enter the heavenly Canaan shall ever be shut out from its glorious scenes. Christ has fulfilled all the conditions of the covenant for His people; and when they enter into glory, an

eternity of ever-augmenting blessedness is before them. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light upon them, nor any heat: for the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and lead them to living fountains of water; and God shall wipe all tears from their eyes" (Rev. vii. 16).

Vers. 13-16 embody a general observation regarding the patriarchs. The apostle states an inference, which he considers to be deducible from the position in which they were placed, and from the language which they employed regarding themselves.

The reference of *οἱ πάντες* admits of question. Gerhard, Sykes, Turner, contend that the words embrace the whole innumerable multitude described in the preceding verse. And certainly the arrangement favours this idea, for these are the persons last mentioned; and the words themselves naturally suggest the idea of more than four or six individuals. It is a very obvious objection, however, to this view, that all the posterity of Abraham according to the flesh were not the faithful servants of God. It may be said, indeed, that the apostle speaks of them as God's people in general terms, without meaning to affirm that every individual was a genuine believer, just as a church is often addressed in terms which no stretch of charity can suppose applicable to every member. Still, according to the apostle's own statement in chap. iii. 16, the number of unbelieving Jews was so preponderatingly large, that we can hardly suppose him to speak of the whole nation in the terms employed in this verse, and with such emphasis upon the number *οἱ πάντες*. Others, as Chrysostom, Œcumenius, Theophylact, conceive these words to point to the persons who have been mentioned by name as examples of faith from the beginning of the chapter. To this it is objected, that Enoch did not die at all, and also that the language of ver. 15 is not applicable to Abel and Noah. There has therefore been a pretty general concurrence in the idea, that the persons meant by the apostle are all the individuals mentioned after the 8th verse, where the call of Abraham is noticed, viz. Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Jacob. This is the view taken by Beza, J. Capellus, Grotius, De Wette; and certainly everything stated in the four

verses under consideration is applicable to each of these individuals. Still I am disposed to think that the apostle here had all the individuals previously mentioned in his view, although in filling up the picture he gives it touches which had a peculiar reference to the four last, who are also the majority.

They died *κατὰ πίστιν*. This phrase differs from the frequently occurring *πίστει* of this chapter. It is accurately adjusted to its place, so as not to designate the means by which they died, but the state in which they died. They died according to faith, under the influence of faith, in a state of mind moulded by faith. The participles which follow have a special reference to *πίστιν*, and are designed to illustrate the statement made in the first clause of the verse. They died in faith, not having received the promises. Here, as in chap. ix. 15, x. 36, xi. 39, *ἐπαγγελία* means, not the promise, but the thing promised. Assurances had been given to them by God as the ground of their faith; but the objects themselves they only saw at a distance. They looked upon them, however, with the confident expectation that in due season they would come near. So our Lord tells us that Abraham anticipated the time of His appearance in the world to fulfil the promises. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; and he saw it, and was glad." *Ἀσπάζομαι* signifies to salute, to welcome; and applied to objects seen at a distance, it implies that they are considered as good and desirable. *Πόρρωθεν* must be viewed as qualifying both *ιδόντες* and *ἀσπασάμενοι*. The promised blessings they saw and hailed at a distance. In the *textus receptus*, *καὶ πεισθέντες* is inserted after *ιδόντες*. But there is a great preponderance of evidence against the genuineness of this phrase. There can be little doubt that it has crept in from the margin as a gloss designed for the explanation of *ἀσπασάμενοι*. It only clogs the sentence, without adding a single new idea to it.

The manner in which the patriarchs thus lived in the future led them to feel that they were strangers and pilgrims upon the earth. Their confession to this effect is accordingly next introduced by the apostle: *καὶ ὁμολογήσαντες*. Where is such confession to be found? One instance of it we have in the case of Jacob, who, when a very old man, says in the presence of Pharaoh, "The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an

hundred and thirty years;" and he also designates the life of his fathers a pilgrimage in the same verse (Gen. xlvii. 9). Dindorf maintains that Jacob's use of the word pilgrimage has reference simply to the fact that he had not yet obtained permanent possession of the land of Canaan. There might be occasion for entertaining this idea, if similar language had never been employed after the children of Israel were conducted into the promised land by Joshua. But we find David expressing himself in the very same manner; and to make it plain that his words do not refer to any temporary banishment from Jerusalem, he applies them not only to himself, but to all his fathers: "For I am a stranger and a sojourner with Thee, as all my fathers were" (Ps. xxxix. 12). And in 1 Chron. xxix. 9, 15, we find that, when reigning as king in Jerusalem, and blessing the Lord before all the congregation, he made use of the same words, and applied them both to himself and the people, and made special reference to the brevity of human life as the ground of his description: "We are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." Without a doubt, therefore, the confession by the patriarchs that they were strangers and pilgrims, was designed to have reference to a state after death more stable and enduring than the present.

Ver. 14. Accordingly, the apostle proceeds to offer a comment upon the statement of the patriarchs, that they were strangers and pilgrims. What do these words mean? Plainly that all their lives through they felt themselves to be from home. They used the language in question not merely in times of adversity, but amid their highest prosperity; not in the wilderness only, but when they had stable possession of the land of Canaan. It was this world, therefore, at its best estate which they considered a strange land. They never looked upon it as their home. It was not their *πατρίς*, or fatherland. The country which they sought was something different from this world. This is declared by some to be a mystic sense put by the apostle upon the words of the patriarchs; but it is the only sense which they can bear, in consistency with the variety of circumstances in which they are used. To call one's self a stranger, is to declare that he does not consider himself to be at home; and

to call one's self a stranger in all possible conditions of life, is the same as saying that the desired blessing of a home is not expected in this world. When *πατρίδα* is rendered country, as in our version, the concatenation of thought is lost. It means, of course, home or fatherland.

Ver. 15. Now the fatherland, by absence from which the patriarchs were constituted strangers and pilgrims, could not be the land of their earthly forefathers. There was nothing to hinder their return to it. But they never thought of recrossing the Euphrates. They longed for a fatherland, and yet they never turned their faces towards the place of their birth. Nay, so far were they from entertaining the idea of returning to it, that we find Abraham, when near his latter end, making Eliezer promise that he would on no account take Isaac to Mesopotamia (Gen. xxiv. 5). It follows, therefore, by strict logical inference, that it was a country beyond death and the grave which the patriarchs looked forward to with so much desire. Many maintain that the saints under the old dispensation knew nothing of a future life; that the thing which they believed when they died in faith was, that their posterity should obtain possession of the land of Canaan. This idea will not bear examination. It implies that the promises given to Abraham had no personal reference to himself at all; and it pours contempt upon the declarations so explicitly made by the apostle in this chapter. *Ἐμνεμόμενον* does not here indicate the bare act of remembering, but remembering so as to think of an object, and to think of it with desire. And the imperfect is used both in the protasis and apodosis, because it is not some single past occasion that is referred to, but a course of conduct extending over centuries. Usually the imperfect with *ἂν* means "might do," and the aorist "might have done;" but the continuance in the past of what is described here requires the imperfect, and *εἶχον ἂν* means "might have had."

Ver. 16. *Νῦν δὲ κρείττονος ὁρέγονται*. Here we have a statement of the conclusion which follows from the arguments of the preceding verses. The fatherland which the patriarchs desired was not the earthly region from which they had come. It must therefore have been the dwelling-place of their Father in heaven. They desire a better country, that is, an heavenly.

This was the object of their firm faith and fond expectation. Their lives were spent in the service of God; and amid all the trials and changes which they experienced, they were sustained by the cheering and delightful prospect, that on quitting this world they should go to a region of closer communion with God. Some, we have seen, maintain that Canaan was the country which the patriarchs desired. The passages quoted from Psalms and First Chronicles sufficiently refute this idea, for David describes his position in terms exactly similar to those employed by Jacob. Ebrard, therefore, allows that Canaan cannot be the country here meant; but he says the thing meant is the theocratic kingdom set up by God among the Jews. The patriarchs looked forward to the time when their posterity should be formed into a theocratic commonwealth; and their desires consequently had no reference to themselves personally, but only to their posterity. The argument, however, already grounded upon the words of David is just as conclusive against this view; for the theocracy was set up long before the days of the Psalmist. If this theocratical kingdom, therefore, was the country desired by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, then the son of Jesse could not with truth describe himself as a stranger and a pilgrim, for he possessed what they wanted. Neither, then, was it Canaan, nor yet was it the enjoyment of religious privileges on earth, which constituted the country desired by the patriarchs; but it was a state beyond death and the grave, a better and a heavenly country, to which each believer looked forward with the conviction that he had a personal interest in it, and would yet dwell in it as his fatherland.

And this view alone is consistent with what follows in the verse before us. For we are assured that God is the God of the patriarchs, and that He hath prepared for them a city. But, according to the views which we are opposing, it was not for them, but for their posterity, that Jehovah prepared a dwelling-place. Διό—wherefore, that is, because they desired a heavenly country—οὐκ ἐπαισχύνεται αὐτοὺς ὁ Θεός, Θεὸς ἐπικαλεῖσθαι αὐτῶν. Here ἐπαισχύνεται has two objects connected with it, viz. the accusative of a person, and the accusative of a thing. God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God. Ἐπικαλεῖσθαι seems here to denote the bearing of a name. God

designated Himself the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, and He did so after these patriarchs had left this world (Ex. iii. 6, 15, 16). He condescended so far as to take a name from them, by which He might be known among their posterity. But how does this name bear upon the apostle's purpose? The bearing becomes obvious the moment we call to mind the commentary of Christ upon this very name, which there can be little doubt the apostle had in his eye: "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living" (Matt. xxii. 32). Of whomsoever it can be affirmed with truth that the Lord is his God, of that same person it may be said that he must necessarily be alive. God and death stand at antipodes to one another; and no being upon whom God has looked so graciously as to designate Himself his God, can ever perish. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, therefore, were living, conscious and happy, after their departure from time. They found God's promises realized in their own personal experience. Strangers and pilgrims upon earth, they went home after death. In illustration of the continued life and happiness of the patriarchs, the apostle adds the clause, *ἡτοίμασε γὰρ αὐτοῖς πόλιν*. This city is the same as the city mentioned in ver. 10, a heavenly city, the city that awaits the people of God in the other state. Do these words imply that the patriarchs were put in possession of the city spoken of immediately after their death?

Vers. 17-21. The next example of faith adduced by the apostle is that of Abraham, as exhibited in the offering of Isaac: *πίστει προσενήνοχεν Ἀβραὰμ τὸν Ἰσαάκ*. Not the historical aorist, but the perfect, is here employed, probably because the act spoken of is viewed by the apostle as well known and celebrated through all time down to the present moment. Its effects and its fame have been permanent. Some would understand the verb as meaning "wished to offer," seeing the sacrifice was not in fact completed. But this does not exhibit the true meaning. The apostle designedly uses a past tense, because Abraham actually obeyed the command of God, so far as he was allowed to do it. Accordingly God accepted the obedience as finished and completed: "Because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me" (Gen. xxii. 16; see also Jas. ii. 21). Most significant is

the language employed in these passages. We are reminded by it, that we are serving a God who will do us most ample justice, who will always accept the will for the deed. Where it has been our purpose to perform some duty, and we have been prevented by causes which we could not possibly control, God will assuredly accept the will for the deed, and we shall receive the same reward as if we had carried out our purpose into action. So equally, on the other hand, where a wicked man has planned some crime, and laid all his measures for its perpetration, he has incurred all the guilt of it, even although unexpected detection should prevent its final accomplishment.

When God gave command to Abraham to offer up his son Isaac, the design was simply to try him. He was *πειραζόμενος*. This word, which is the one also used in Gen. xxii. 1, bears both a good sense and a bad one—trying and tempting; see Jas. i. 13. Here, its meaning is, to put to the proof. Abraham's faith was tried, and it stood the test of the very difficult ordeal through which it had to pass. Wherefore the apostle says, *πίστει προσενήνοχεν*. He took his son to the altar. Not a misgiving arose in his mind. He clove and spread out the wood. He bound Isaac with cords. He stretched him upon the pile. He lifted the knife to plunge it into his bosom. Paternal affection dissuaded from the stroke. The apparent criminality of the deed remonstrated against it; and the seemingly inevitable frustration of God's promise which it involved uttered the same note. Yet Abraham had an ear for nothing but the voice of God. It was enough that Jehovah had issued the command. Paternal affection, though sorely tried, restrained its voice. Nothing could be criminal which God commanded. And as for God's promises, He Himself would find a way of accomplishing them. Abraham's faith thus emerged triumphant from the trial. His offering of Isaac is perhaps the most marvellous instance of trust in God, of unquestioning submission to His will, which the whole history of the church supplies.

The apostle dwells upon the case of Abraham, that he may bring out all its wonderful features. He offered up *τὸν μονογενῆ*, his only-begotten son, that is, the only son whom he had by his wife Sarah—the child of promise, the hope of his house,

around whom all his affections and loftiest aspirations were clustered. Abraham is here described as he that had received the promises. This expression does not merely mean that promises had been given to him. *Ἀναδεξάμενος* expresses more. It signifies not only that promises had been addressed to him, but that he had accepted them, and laid fast hold of them. The idea here is quite different from that expressed in *λαβόντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας* in ver. 13, and *ἐκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν* in ver. 39, where enjoyment of the promised blessings is meant. Indeed, there are three shades of thought with reference to promises exhibited in this epistle: viz. having them as addressed to us, in chap. vii. 6; accepting and cleaving to them, as here; and enjoying the blessings themselves, as in chap. xi. 13, 39.

Ver. 18. Here one of the promises given to Abraham is specially brought into view, as tending to set forth the marvellous strength of his faith. *Πρὸς ὃν* has been supposed by many to refer to Isaac, the preposition receiving the same acceptation as in Heb. i. 7, iv. 13: in reference to whom. But Abraham is the person of whom mention is last made, and he is the leading subject of the whole verse. The more usual sense of *πρὸς* points to this antecedent, and *σοὶ* in the clause quoted supports the same idea. Therefore beyond a question *πρὸς ὃν* should be rendered, to whom. What was said to Abraham is adduced by the apostle in the words of the LXX. from Gen. xxi. 12, *ὅτι ἐν Ἰσαὰκ κληθήσεται σοι σπέρμα*—In Isaac a seed shall be named to thee. A seed named as Abraham's posterity was to spring up in the line of Isaac. Abraham had other descendants; but those specially known as his children were to be the seed of Isaac, and the promises were to be fulfilled to them. The chosen people were to be descended from the child of promise. Now, what an invincible obstacle might not all this have appeared to the offering up of Isaac in sacrifice! If Abraham killed his son, the child of promise, and consumed his body upon the burning wood, how then could the promises of God receive their accomplishment? If the foundation was destroyed, what was to bear up the superstructure? If the fountain was closed, how were the streams to issue forth? The promise, that in Isaac Abraham's seed

were to be named, and the command to sacrifice Isaac, seem utterly irreconcilable. Does not the one contradict the other? Might not the patriarch, therefore, have been tempted to conclude that the command to sacrifice Isaac could not have come from God? It must have been some mental hallucination. It did not at all square with his past experience. It was unlike God. The whole proceeding seemed irrational and immoral. Yet these tremendous difficulties do not seem to have at all shaken Abraham's faith. The command was just as certainly from God as the previous promise. He had the same evidence of the divine origin of the one as of the other; and he could question neither, without giving up his whole faith in that God whose faithfulness he had experienced during the whole of a long life. Was not the very existence of Isaac, born of parents long past age, a proof of God's faithfulness and power? Had the promise of a child to Sarah been a delusion? But he had the same certainty that the command to sacrifice Isaac came from God, as formerly that the promise of his birth was divine. That promise he had not doubted at the time. And, moreover, it had been abundantly verified by the result. Therefore now he could not possibly question the command as to the sacrifice. To do so would have been in the highest degree irrational, and would have involved the necessity of denying all the principles of his past life, whose certainty he had experienced on many a trying occasion. No doubt there were great difficulties in his path, but difficulties had formerly melted away; and it was the dictate of sound reason to trust now, seeing he had never before found trust in God deceive him. Therefore Abraham believed and obeyed.

The example of Abraham, as here detailed, is of vast importance, whether in relation to principle or practice. How often do we find persons who, although acknowledging the existence of God, and the divine origin of Christianity, yet refuse to believe doctrines on the evidence of Scripture, unless, at the same time, these doctrines appear quite rational to themselves! Now this is in the highest degree irrational and absurd. If we had no revelation, then there would be no help for it, but that we should follow what appeared reasonable to ourselves. But if we have a revelation, if we are not prepared to deny that the

Bible is the word of God, then it is the dictate of sound reason that we must believe everything propounded in that book, even though it should appear to us difficult and strange, and what, left to ourselves, we should never have thought of admitting. Cast away the book, and then believe what you please. In this there is consistency. But to receive the book as from God, and yet to claim the privilege of embracing only those principles of it which seem to us reasonable, is most unreasonable. First of all let us make sure that God has spoken to us in the Scriptures. Then, with docile minds, let us settle what, on fair principles of interpretation, is the sense of the sacred text. And let us embrace that in all its parts, however much there may be in it that is calculated to stagger our minds. What we see not now, we shall know hereafter.

Are we to imagine that, when Abraham complied with God's command to sacrifice Isaac, he considered it to be a repeal of the promise that he should have a numerous posterity through this son? Not at all. His confidence in the promise was not in the least abated. It was God's promise, and would certainly be accomplished. He knew not how, but that was God's business. Let Isaac be reduced to ashes, and still the promise would stand; God would raise him from the dead, rather than let His promise fail. Accordingly the apostle suggests this as the very idea which Abraham employed to harmonize the promise with the perplexing command: *λογισάμενος ὅτι καὶ ἐκ νεκρῶν*. A case of resurrection from the dead had never as yet occurred. Yet we are here told that the idea presented itself to the mind of Abraham. But how does the apostle know that the patriarch reasoned in this manner? By inference from the facts of the case. Abraham never doubted that Isaac's posterity should be numerous as the stars of the sky. Yet he saw the childless Isaac at the point of death. He could not therefore but believe that God would raise Isaac from the dead. It is difficult to imagine what other method he could think of. And that he took refuge in this idea, at a time when such a thing as a resurrection had never occurred, shows the marvellous strength of his faith. He would believe anything rather than that God's promise could fail. Perhaps also one purpose of this whole transaction might be to suggest to the

patriarch's mind the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, which as yet was altogether unknown. The trial of his faith was the main object, but the expansion of his ideas might also be one of the ends.

What is the meaning of the second clause, *ὅθεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἐν παραβολῇ ἔκομίσατο*? Abraham expected that Isaac would rise from the dead. However, his sacrifice was prevented by a voice from heaven, and therefore his resurrection was not needed. Still something like it occurred. The patriarch received his son from the dead *ἐν παραβολῇ*. He was not actually, but only intentionally, offered. So he was not really, but only figuratively, raised from the dead. This seems to be the general import of the clause. Still there have been exceedingly various views taken of it. Every word has been contested. *ὅθεν* bears the two significations of wherefore and whence. The former is to be found in Heb. ii. 17, iii. 1, vii. 25, viii. 3, ix. 18; and most interpreters adopt this sense here also, so as to bring out the idea that, on account of his tried faith, Abraham had Isaac restored to him. This idea is a good one; but it is a fatal objection to such an interpretation of *ὅθεν*, that in this view *ἔκομίσατο* is left without any word to define from what it was that Isaac was delivered. It is too bald a statement merely to say, "on which account he received Isaac." *ὅθεν*, therefore, must have the second sense attached to it: from whence, viz. from the dead, he received Isaac. Still it remains a question what it is the apostle refers to. Hammond, Alberti, Schulz, Stuart, and others, conceive that the birth of Isaac is the thing meant. And their view is, that this event is assigned by the apostle as a reason why Abraham so readily admitted the idea of a resurrection. He had already received Isaac from the dead womb of Sarah, and from his own dead body. And could he now doubt that God was able to restore to him this same son, after he should be reduced to ashes by the fire of the altar? But there are two insuperable objections to this view. According to all usage, when one person is said to receive another from the dead, it is the person received who has been dead, and not at all the receiver. Lazarus was restored from the grave to Martha and Mary. But here Abraham himself was the person that was dead, and Isaac, whom he received, had never been

dead at all. Again, to bring out the sense which we are opposing, *ἐκομίσατο* ought undoubtedly to have been in the pluperfect. True, there are some cases where the aorist is used for the pluperfect; but Winer has shown that this only happens where the priority of the one event to the other is not intended to be very specially exhibited. But here the order of time is the very life of the thought. If Isaac's birth be the thing that is meant, and if it be assigned as a reason for Abraham's ready belief of a resurrection, then its prior occurrence ought to have been specially marked, and the pluperfect was the only proper tense. The clause, therefore, must be understood as referring to something posterior to the offering of Isaac. In short, it must mean that he was saved from what appeared certain death: from whence, that is, from the dead, Abraham received him. In his father's view, he was as good as dead. The knife was uplifted that was to pierce him to the heart. So, in the parable of the prodigal, the father says, "This my son was dead, and is alive; he was lost, and is found." *Kai* here means "also;" and it refers to the resemblance between what really occurred, and what the patriarch is represented in the preceding clause as supposing.

For what purpose are the words *ἐν παραβολῇ* inserted? Raphelius and Krebs understand them to mean "against all expectation," *insperato*; and they appeal to Polybius in justification of this sense; but no unquestionable instance of it can be found. It is not warranted by usage. Læsner, Schmid, Ernesti, Tholuck, view the phrase as meaning, "with exposure to danger, hardly, with difficulty." There is some ground for this signification in the usage of the cognate verb, but the noun itself never bears any such meaning. It seems therefore imperative, with Grotius, Scaliger, Dindorf, Kuinöl, Bretschneider, Bleek, to abide by the signification which *παραβολή* currently bears in Scripture, viz. likeness, similitude, figure. The phrase seems to have been inserted by the apostle for the purpose of indicating that it was not an actual resurrection of Isaac which took place, but only something similar, something which might be so designated. But why notice such a peculiar kind of resurrection at all? The thought is a most natural one, as coming after what is said in the preceding clause.

Abraham was meditating upon the idea of a resurrection from the dead ; and, in fact, adds the apostle, he received him from the dead in a certain sense. He received him back *ἐν παραβολῇ*, in a figure, figuratively. This, or some such idea, is indispensable to make the statement of the apostle true. Take away this idea, and then it cannot be said that Abraham received Isaac from the dead. And this furnishes a most conclusive argument against the first two interpretations of the phrase under notice, even although abundant usage could be adduced in their favour. "*Οθεν* refers to *ἐκ νεκρῶν*. Now, *ἐκ νεκρῶν* means literally, from the dead, from amongst the dead ; *ὅθεν αὐτὸν ἐκομίσαστο*, therefore, must mean literally, from the dead he received him. It is a literal resurrection that is spoken of in the first clause, and it must be a literal resurrection also that is meant in the second, unless some qualifying phrase be introduced. Such a phrase you find in *ἐν παραβολῇ*, if it means in a figure, figuratively, by similitude. But if it means unexpectedly, or with great hazard, then there is nothing to warrant the supposition that anything else than a real resurrection is meant, and we are bound to suppose that Isaac was actually dead. The real use of *ἐν παραβολῇ* is to point out the relation subsisting between the two clauses of the verse. In the first a literal resurrection is spoken of ; in the second, only something resembling a resurrection is meant.

Many imagine that *ἐν παραβολῇ*, besides defining the kind of resurrection, meant also the purpose of pointing forward as a type to the resurrection of Christ, or to the general resurrection. But this can hardly, with any propriety, be admitted. The phrase cannot serve both purposes. It either indicates the fact that only something resembling a resurrection is meant, or it exhibits the thing spoken of as a type of our Lord's resurrection, or the general resurrection. Now, if the latter be the sense intended, then we should have expected *εἰς παραβολήν* ; and not only so, but it is clear also that now there would be nothing to indicate that the words *ὅθεν ἐκομίσαστο* were not to be understood quite literally, "from the dead he received him;" but there is nothing to define now, nothing to show that it was in a manner at all different from the literal rising spoken of in the preceding clause.

Vers. 20-22. The three examples that follow, have all reference to the near descendants of Abraham; and they are all examples of faith as displayed in the foresight of futurity, in the belief and prediction of good things to come. The first is the case of Isaac: *πίστει περὶ μελλόντων εὐλόγησεν Ἰσαάκ*. Here *εὐλόγησεν* imports more than the expression of good wishes. It signifies to bless efficaciously, to pronounce blessings which are certainly to be realized. The patriarch was moved by the Spirit of God, and he foresaw the fortunes of his two sons; and believing what was thus revealed to him, he declared accordingly. By faith he blessed them. So, when our Lord blessed His disciples, He breathed upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost. *Περὶ μελλόντων* stands connected, not with *πίστει*, but with *εὐλόγησεν*. He blessed them in reference to future things. He unfolded the destinies that awaited them in God's providence. But how, it may be asked, can Isaac be supposed to have been moved by the Spirit of prophecy, when he addressed Jacob as if he had been Esau, and gave him the blessing he designed for his brother? (Gen. xxvii. 26-40.) To this it may be replied, that inspiration does not reveal everything to those favoured with it; and that where the Spirit speaks not, the most gifted prophet knows nothing more than any other man. We have only to suppose that Isaac was made acquainted with the two destinies in store for his two sons, but was left in darkness as to the particular allocation of them. And this not being revealed, he naturally enough thought of assigning the higher blessing to the older son, who was also his favourite. But events were so overruled, that he was led unwittingly to pronounce the right blessing upon each of his sons. Jacob was first and most highly blessed; and Isaac, although this ran counter to his inclinations, yet felt that the hand of God was in it, and that he, a mere instrument in Jehovah's hands, had no power to recall what he had spoken. This, too, is the reason why the apostle puts the name of Jacob first.

Ver. 21. The next example of faith adduced is that of Jacob, who, when dying, blessed the two sons of Joseph. It has been considered strange that the apostle here makes mention of the blessings pronounced upon Ephraim and Manasseh, described in

Gen. xlviii., rather than those of Jacob's own twelve sons, exhibited in Gen. xlix., which were much more solemn and important. With much probability, Bleek supposes the reason to be, that the case of Esau and Jacob, stated in the preceding verse, of whom the younger was preferred to the elder, would suggest the case of Ephraim and Manasseh, where a similar transposition took place. Of all the sons, too, of Jacob, Joseph was the most distinguished; and his two sons were adopted by Jacob as his own, to rank among the twelve tribes. It is also expressly said that Jacob blessed Ephraim and Manasseh; whereas, with regard to the twelve patriarchs, it is only said that he told them what was to befall them in the last days (Gen. xlix. 1). No doubt either case would have supplied a striking example of faith; but there are fine harmonies between the two actually exhibited in vers. 20 and 21. The apostle uses the word *ἐκαστον* rather than *ἀμφοτέρους*, because the latter would not individualize sufficiently. It would only imply that both were blessed; but the former expresses the idea that each received his own special blessing. From the employment of *ἐκαστον* in preference to *ἐκάτερον*, the inference has been drawn, that the verse was intended to refer to the twelve sons of Jacob as well as to the two sons of Joseph, and that therefore probably the words *τῶν αὐτοῦ υἱῶν καὶ* have fallen out of the text. But there is no proof of this whatever; and though it be true that *ἐκάτερον* means specifically each of two, it is also true that *ἐκαστον* may designate each of two, as well as each of a greater number. *Ἀποθνήσκων* is suggested by what is said in Gen. xlviii. 21, "Behold, I am dying." The patriarch felt that his latter end was approaching; and being moved by the Spirit of God, he pronounced blessings upon the two sons of Joseph. Shortly afterwards, also, he foretold the fortunes of all his own family.

The second clause of this verse is attended with very considerable difficulty. It is taken from Gen. xlvii. 31, where it occurs just after the mention of the oath which Jacob made Joseph swear with reference to his bones, and before the blessing of Ephraim and Manasseh, in Gen. xlviii. 1. Why, then, does the apostle introduce it here at all, seeing it was prior to what is mentioned in the first clause? His object might be to exhibit the pious frame of Jacob's mind during his last days, when he

pronounced the blessings described. Independently of this, too, the incident of itself presents an illustration of Jacob's faith. The words, as they stand in the Hebrew text, are rendered in our version, "And Israel bowed himself upon the bed's head" (Gen. xlvii. 31). They thus correspond very exactly to what is said of David in 1 Kings i. 47, "And the king bowed himself upon the bed." First of all, what is meant by the bowing in these two cases? Some say it was reclining for rest, after the effort which had been put forth. Others say it was a simple expression of satisfaction with what had been spoken by those standing near. But there can be no reasonable doubt that it was an act of divine worship. The verb is the appropriate one to express this idea; and both Jacob and David were men whose satisfaction, particularly in the circumstances described, would at once seek to display itself in worship. And, in fact, we are plainly informed that the words David uttered, after bowing himself, were these: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who hath given one to sit on my throne this day, mine eyes even seeing it."

But there is another difficulty connected with the word, which the Seventy have rendered by *πάβδου*: "Israel worshipped upon the top of his staff." It may be doubted whether the Masoretic punctuation here be correct. The event took place some little time before Jacob's death; and although his end was approaching, yet he was able to sit up, leaning upon his staff. In fact, his last sickness is represented as commencing after this time (Gen. xlviii. 1), so that the signification of staff seems fully as suitable as that of bed; and the apostle has followed the Septuagint in adopting this sense of the Hebrew word. What, then, is the meaning of the whole clause, according to this view? Doubtless that Jacob worshipped God, leaning upon the top of his staff. He bowed and rested his head upon his staff, or upon his hands, grasping his staff,—a most natural act in his circumstances. And how did this manifest his faith? All worship implies faith, and not only so, but Joseph had promised to carry up his father's body to Canaan; and the aged saint thanked God that his mortal remains were to rest in the land of promise. He thus exhibited a firm persuasion that Egypt was not to be the continued dwelling-place of his

posterity, but that they were in due season to be conducted by Providence to the region long since marked out as their inheritance. And, doubtless, whilst anticipating the earthly Canaan for his descendants, he would be led to think of that better country which the apostle says the patriarchs desired.

Another sense has been assigned by many to the words before us. The "staff" is conceived to be not Jacob's, but Joseph's; and it is made the object of the worship spoken of. Jacob bowed before the sceptre of authority in Joseph's hands, thanking Joseph for his promise, rendering him the civil homage due to a ruler, and thus fulfilling the dreams of his youth. So the Vulgate, "*Adoravit fastigium virgæ ejus;*" and Cæcumenius, *προσεκύνησε τῇ ῥάβδῳ*; and many others, as Erasmus, Schmid, Tholuck. But the Greek will not bear this sense, nor will the Hebrew.

The Greek admits it not; for *προσκυνέω* is followed either by the accusative or the dative, when the object of reverence is indicated, and not by *ἐπὶ*. The Hebrew admits it not; for the verb used in Genesis is commonly followed by *ל* or *לְפָנָיו*, to mark out the object. Once indeed *ל* is used for this purpose (Lev. xxvi. 1); but this deficiency in the argument, grounded upon the particles, is more than compensated by the total want of anything in the Hebrew text to connect the staff with Joseph. The staff must belong to the person spoken of, viz. Jacob; and therefore both *ל* and *ἐπὶ* must mean, "upon the top of his own staff." Theophylact allows this, even while supposing Joseph to be the object of the reverence; for he conceives *τῷ Ἰωσήφ* to be understood. But seeing the object of the worship is not stated, the character of the pious patriarch renders it immensely more probable that it is God that is meant, than Joseph. Indeed, the passage already cited from 1 Kings i. 47 is sufficient to settle the question; for there the language is exactly the same as in Genesis, and its reference is made plain by an address to God in the following verse.

Vers. 22–28. The faith of Joseph is next brought into view. As *ἀποθνήσκων* is used in ver. 21 in regard to Jacob, who said *ἰδοὺ ἀποθνήσκω* (Gen. xlviii. 21), so *τελευτῶν* is here applied to Joseph, both for the sake of variety, and perhaps also because this is the word employed in Gen. i. 26. *Μνημονεύω* is usually

construed with the genitive or accusative ; but here it is followed by *περί*, which makes it the more certain that the verb is used in the sense of making mention. Though well treated at the time, the children of Israel had a long and hard bondage before them in Egypt. This had been explicitly revealed to Abraham (Gen. xv. 14-16), and he had also been assured that after four hundred years the day of deliverance should arrive. Joseph was aware of these announcements, for he says, "which God swore to Abraham, and to Isaac, and to Jacob;" and he firmly believed them. The high honours which he enjoyed at the court of Pharaoh did not shut out the conviction that painful reverses were at hand ; nor did the idea of these long-continued sorrows shake his faith in the certainty of a glorious deliverance. He spoke to his brethren of God's purpose to visit them in mercy, and to carry them up with mighty power to the land of promise ; and, actuated by the same spirit as his father, he charged them to take his bones along with them when the day of redemption came. And his faith in the certainty of the exodus appears the more striking from this circumstance, that he does not ask to have his body transported to Canaan at the time of his death, like Jacob, but only when the whole congregation of the Lord went up. It matters little to the immortal spirit where the clay tenement is laid after death, but still there is a desire in most minds that their dust may repose among their kindred and friends. And this desire is always the stronger, the more deeply the conviction is felt that death occasions only a temporary separation. The sepulchres of believers are the resting-places where they wait for a blessed and glorious resurrection. Conceive the grave to be an abyss of eternal annihilation, and the holy, solemnizing, and elevating feelings which now cluster round it would be for ever dispelled.

Ver. 23. The apostle now advances to the time of Moses ; and as he had assigned a large space upon his canvas to Abraham, the founder of the Jewish nation, he presents the portrait of their great legislator with equal prominence. The first example of faith adduced is rather that of the parents of Moses than his own. Yet he is placed in the foreground, as if the purpose were to indicate that in his very infancy he became the occasion of an exhibition of faith on the part of others. In Ex. ii. 2 there is

only mention made of his mother as concerned in saving him. The Septuagint version, however, uses the plural ἰδούρες; and doubtless, although his mother would mainly be employed in guarding him, his father also concurred in the design of preserving his life. The apostle accordingly follows the Septuagint, and uses the plural πατέρων. This word strictly denotes fathers, but sometimes, although rarely, it is applied, like the Latin *patres*, to both parents. Wetstein quotes an undoubted example from Parthenius, *Erot.* 10. Bengel, Bœhme, Vater, and Paulus conceive that here it refers to the father and grandfather; but this idea would represent the apostle as running counter to the statement in Exodus, and positively excluding the mother from all share in the transaction. The reason assigned for the procedure of the parents is, that they saw their child was ἀστέιον, beautiful, comely. This is the word employed by the LXX. as the rendering of טוֹב, goodly, fair; and the same word occurs in the address of Stephen, with the addition of Θεῶ to form a superlative, exceedingly fair (Acts vii. 20). There must have been something very remarkable about the appearance of the infant Moses, and from this the parents drew the inference to some great work. The employment of πῑότει shows that the parents must have believed something in regard to the future life of their son. Josephus mentions that Amram had received notice in a dream of the greatness which awaited his son (*Antiq.* ii. 9, 3); but a different reason is assigned by the apostle for the conduct of the parents. Certain it is, however, that they must either have received a direct communication from heaven; or, knowing that God intended to deliver His people, they must have been led in some way or other, by the appearance of their child, to conclude that he was the destined deliverer. For it was by faith they hid him. In so doing they ran counter to the command of the king, that all male children among the Israelites were to be destroyed (Ex. i. 16, 22). But they disregarded this tyrannical edict. They were not afraid of the wrath of the king. Though not insensible to the danger they ran, they were willing, at the dictate of duty, to expose themselves to every hazard. Their faith triumphed over their fear. And thus were they an example to the Jews, and to the people of God in all times.

Ver. 24. The faith of Moses himself is now brought into view. *Μέγας γενόμενος* is the very phrase which is employed in Ex. ii. 11. Schulz and Bretschneider conceive it to mean, elevated to greatness and honour; but both here and in Exodus the contrast lies with childhood, and therefore the expression must mean, grown to man's estate. See also Gen. xxxviii. 11. Calvin remarks that the mature age of Moses is mentioned, that there might be no room for ascribing the step to youthful levity or inexperience. *Ἐπηύσατο*—he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. Long had he enjoyed this honour, but he now saw it to be inconsistent with the faithful service of Jehovah. It was in his option to remain at the court of Pharaoh; but if he did so, then he must continue severed from his kindred, and all the aspirations which, despite their bondage, they cherished. On the other hand, if he sought their society, and acknowledged their God, he must renounce the worldly glory to which adoption had raised him. The alternatives thus set before him constituted a trial of extreme severity. Josephus states that the king's daughter, whom he names Thermutis, was the only child of her father, and that she destined the throne for her adopted son (*Antiq.* lib. ii. c. 5). But, independently of this view, it is obvious that Moses had before him the most brilliant worldly prospects in Egypt. He was recognised as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He was a man of uncommon natural ability; and he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. What might not such an individual have aspired to? What heights of greatness could have appeared beyond his reach? The fascinations of pleasure and the sweets of power must have spread out their attractions before him on every side, and he must have felt that a splendid destiny was offered to him in Egypt. And now reverse the picture. What lay before him if he joined the Israelites, and espoused their views? They were slaves. They were oppressed under a cruel and degrading bondage. Their religious views and practices were an abomination to the Egyptians. And nothing could be conceived more certain to damage a man's prospects, than the avowal of sympathy or kindred with the despised posterity of Jacob.

Yet Moses, with these splendid prospects alluring him on the one hand, and these sorrows and degradations deterring him

on the other, deliberately and cheerfully made choice of Jehovah as his God, and joined himself to his oppressed kindred. He renounced all the prospects he had been accustomed to cherish as the son of Pharaoh's daughter.

Ver. 25 brings into view the nature and voluntary character of the sacrifice which Moses made in the step which he took. *Μᾶλλον ἐλόμενος*—rather choosing to suffer affliction with the people of God, to encounter all the difficulties and troubles which his adhesion to their views and interests might bring upon him. *Συγκαταχεῖσθαι* is only to be found here. The simple verb, however, is of frequent occurrence, and the force of the prefixed preposition is abundantly clear.

Ἡ πρόσκαιρον—than to obtain a temporary enjoyment from sin. *Ἀμαρτίας* here designates the particular sin of apostasy from the worship of Jehovah; *ἀπόλαυσις* refers to the enjoyment which Moses might have secured at the court of Pharaoh, by means of renouncing the God of his fathers. A genitive after *ἀπόλαυσις* sometimes designates the thing enjoyed, but here obviously *ἀμαρτίας* rather denotes the means whereby such object is obtained. Pleasure could hardly be found in the act of apostasy itself, but it is conceived as reached by means of apostasy. Such pleasure, however, can only be *πρόσκαιρον*, temporary, for a season. Even at the time of its enjoyment, the *ἀμαρτία*, which procures the forbidden object, may plant a sting in the bosom. And sooner or later the object itself which has been purchased at the expense of principle, always an extravagant price, will be torn from the grasp of the infatuated sinner. The honours and pleasures of Egypt, if Moses had preferred them to the service of God, could only have remained in his possession for a time. They might have been wrested from him long before the end of his life, and he might have been doomed to experience the uncertainty of the favour of kings; and, at the very longest, he could only have retained them during his continuance in this world. And, doubtless, it is the duration of earthly life to which *πρόσκαιρον* points. The pleasures of sin are short-lived, even when they continue till death; for what is time compared with eternity? It is plain from this verse that the apostle conceived Moses to be quite aware of the existence of another state beyond the grave. On

no other principle can the employment of the word *πρόσκαιρον* be accounted for. On the Warburtonian theory, that Moses was ignorant of a future state, the honours of Egypt could not have appeared to him more temporary than the pleasures of piety, though they might have appeared less valuable. And let it be observed, that *πρόσκαιρον* in this verse does not express a judgment of the apostle; it describes the view which Moses took, and upon which he acted when he made his choice.

Ver. 26. Here the principles upon which Moses proceeded are more fully disclosed. *Ἠγησάμενος* and *ἐλόμενος*, in ver. 25, do not stand co-ordinate with one another, as if both were similarly dependent upon the leading verb *ἠρνήσατο*; but *ἠγησάμενος* is dependent upon *ἐλόμενος*, and assigns the reason for the act which it describes. Moses refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. In the very act of doing so he chose affliction—*ἐλόμενος συγκακουχεῖσθαι*. And the reason why he made this choice was, because he considered *ἠγησάμενος*, the reproach of Christ, more valuable than Egyptian treasures. The two clauses of the 26th verse correspond to the two clauses of the 25th, and express substantially the same ideas. The reproach of Christ is just another phrase employed to express what had already been designated suffering affliction with the people of God. Both clauses undeniably point to the same thing. It has therefore been concluded by Grotius, Gomarus, Junius, and others, that the word *Χριστοῦ* here means the collective body of God's people; but the conclusion is utterly groundless. Such a method of reasoning would make sad work with the parallels of Hebrew poetry. Although two clauses may refer to the very same thing, it does not follow that the separate words all bear the same signification. Parallel clauses always describe the object to which they refer under different aspects, otherwise they would be quite intolerable. It admits of no doubt therefore at all, that *Χριστοῦ* here, as in all other parts of the epistle, designates the person of the Lord Jesus. What, then, must be understood by the phrase "reproach of Christ," as describing the sufferings of Moses? The language is susceptible of two shades of meaning; viz. first, reproach like Christ's; and secondly, reproach on account of Christ.

The first view is defended by Theodoret, Limborch, Storr,

Tholuck, Bleek, Estius, Ernesti, Stuart; and the main argument adduced in its favour is grounded upon chap. xiii. 13, where the same words, it is said, must mean reproach like Christ's, "bearing His reproach." But this view of the words in the verse before us is liable to very serious objection. For according to it they do not exhibit the principle upon which Moses acted, but only a judgment of the apostle regarding it. Moses did not know the particular sufferings Christ was to endure, and therefore he could not be influenced by the consideration that his own resembled Christ's. But, further, in what respect are we to suppose the reproach cast upon Moses resembled the reproach cast upon Christ? Chrysostom says, that as Christ was rejected by His countrymen, so Moses was rejected by his brethren when he first went among them. They said, Who made thee a judge and a ruler over us? But this cannot be the reproach referred to; for with what propriety could it be said that Moses refused the honours of Egypt, because he preferred to be rejected by his brethren? The fact is, he expected no such thing. He supposed they would have known that he was to be the instrument of their deliverance (Acts vii. 25). It was not rejection by them, but suffering along with them, which he had made up his mind to endure, and which he counted greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt.

But it may be said that the reproach meant is not the particular reproach specified by Chrysostom, but reproach for righteousness' sake in general, such as Christ encountered. This is a juster view. But still the objection already mentioned remains, that the words would exhibit not Moses' own principle of action, but the apostle's judgment in regard to it. The statement would be, that Moses counted something, which the apostle says resembled Christ's sufferings, greater riches than Egypt's treasures. But the whole construction of the sentence requires that *ὀνειδισμόν τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, like everything else in it, should be considered as exhibiting not the apostle's judgment, but Moses' own view. He chose what he himself felt to be *ὀνειδισμόν τοῦ Χριστοῦ*. And consequently this phrase must mean, reproach on account of Christ. But it may be rejoined, was not Moses as ignorant of the person of Christ as of the

character and extent of His sufferings? By no means. He was ignorant indeed of the name Christ; and he had not those views of the Saviour's person and work which we now gather from the New Testament. But he knew the Messiah as the expected deliverer of God's people,—as the seed of Abraham, in whom all the families of the earth were to be blessed,—as the Prophet, in some respects like unto himself, whom the Lord was to raise up for the salvation and guidance of Israel. This was the hope which sustained and cheered all the patriarchs; and this was the hope on account of which Moses was willing to abandon the glories of Egypt, and to submit to a life of suffering and reproach. This was the principle of his conduct, the motive by which he was consciously impelled. This principle, or motive, the apostle describes in language borrowed from the new dispensation, using a name of the Messiah unknown to the saints of old. But a similar use of this name is made in other parts of the New Testament, as in 1 Cor. x. 4, 9, where the rock pouring forth living streams in the wilderness is designated Christ, and where it is implied that the children of Israel tempted Christ during their wanderings. It was faith in the promised Messiah that influenced Moses—the belief that the Angel of God's presence was with His chosen people; and thus he was enabled to encounter all difficulties and reproaches. *Ὁνειδισμὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ* is the description of a principle which has governed the pious in all ages, more clear and definite since the Saviour's advent, but not less real before that time. The flower is now fully blown: it was only in the bud or in the seed formerly, but Christ was always its life. With regard to the argument grounded upon chap. xiii. 13, the import of the phrase there used will afterwards come under our notice.

What a strength of faith is here attributed to Moses! He not only encounters reproaches for the sake of Him in whom he trusts, but he actually considers these reproaches as constituting greater wealth than all he might have enjoyed in Egypt. He counts it all joy to fall into divers tribulations. He was happier as the persecuted and despised worshipper of Jehovah, the avowed kinsman of slaves, than as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, and the admired proficient in all Egyptian wisdom. He felt that he was richer, despoiled of the treasures of Egypt.

He felt that he was happier, divorced from the pleasures of sin. He felt that he was freer, reduced to the bondage of his countrymen. He was richer, because enriched with the riches of grace; happier, because blessed with the smiles of an approving conscience; freer, because enfranchised with the liberty of the sons of God. The blessings he chose were richer than all the advantages he cast away.

The recompense of reward to which Moses looked is supposed by Grotius to mean the land of Canaan. This is a frivolous idea. It would imply that Moses was deceived in the principles by which he was actuated, for he never entered the promised land. Without a doubt, the anticipated reward was the heavenly inheritance, the better and enduring substance mentioned in chap. x. 34, 35, xi. 10, 14-16.

Ver. 27. Moses not only chose the Lord as his God, but he also persevered in His service. He shrank back from no step which his adhesion to the cause of the Israelites might render necessary. *Πίστει κατέδραπεν*. By faith he left Egypt. Here it is a question whether the departure spoken of be that which took place when he killed the Egyptian and fled for his life (Ex. ii. 15), or his final removal, when he marched away at the head of the Israelites (Ex. xiv. 13). The ancient fathers almost with one voice adopt the former view, and they are followed by Calmet, Michaelis, Schulz, De Wette, and others. But the bulk of modern interpreters take the latter view. In favour of the reference to the flight into Midian, it is argued that the chronological sequence of events is better preserved by it, and that it was a departure of Moses himself, whereas in the other case he was but one among many thousands. On the other hand, a powerful argument against this view is furnished by the express statement, that when Moses fled into Midian he was afraid (Ex. ii. 14), whereas he had no fear on the other occasion referred to. On the contrary, he went boldly into the king's presence; and when he left him, he told him to his face that they should meet no more (Ex. x. 28, xiv. 13). And with regard to the alleged violation of chronological order, it is more apparent than real. Ver. 27 states the general fact of the departure from Egypt, and then vers. 28 and 29 exhibit two particular features of it. Besides, the flight into Midian can

hardly be considered as a striking instance of faith, whereas the final departure from Egypt presented an illustrious exhibition of this grace. Moses undertook to lead a numerous and helpless multitude away from the control of their masters into a distant country, while apparently insurmountable obstacles obstructed his path, which he had absolutely no means at all of removing. The attempt, so far as human calculation was concerned, was madness. There was reason, too, to apprehend that the extorted consent of Pharaoh, who had already changed so frequently, might be withdrawn, and that the armies of Egypt would pursue the retreating Israelites, and drag them back to bondage. Yet Moses feared not the wrath of the king. He was acting under the authority of the God of heaven, in whom he trusted. His conduct was thus a striking exhibition of faith, and well might the apostle say, "By faith he left Egypt."

Τὸν γὰρ ἀόρατον, κ.τ.λ. Luther, Bengel, Paulus, Ebrard, and others, make ἐκατέρησεν govern ἀόρατον, and view the clause as meaning, "He held to the invisible God, as if he saw Him." But although the arrangement of the words naturally suggests this government, yet the meaning of ἐκατέρησεν does not at all comport with it. This verb is used intransitively in the sense of enduring, persevering, remaining stedfast. It is also used transitively; but then it means, bearing things considered as evils and trials, and with no propriety can it be viewed as governing ἀόρατον. It cannot have God for its object, without having a sense forced upon it which it never bears. If it really did govern ἀόρατον, then we should be shut up to the view of Bretschneider, that this adjective was applied to Pharaoh, and that the clause represented Moses as not fearing Pharaoh when he was no longer seen, although pursuing, any more than he had feared him when standing in his presence. But such an interpretation is quite intolerable. Without a doubt, therefore, ἀόρατον is governed by ὁρῶν, and ἐκατέρησεν is used intransitively: He endured, or stood firm, as seeing Him who is invisible. He saw the invisible God with the eye of faith. This was the principle or root of his endurance. He entertained no doubt that Jehovah, though unseen by the eye of sense, was near to His people, and active in their defence. His conviction was as firm as if God's arm had been palpable to his eye. The

last clause of the verse just contains a fuller development of what is implied in the first word, *πίστευ*. The seeing of the invisible One is faith. This same word *ἀόρατος* is applied to God in 1 Tim. i. 17, and the attribute which it designates is described in different words in the same epistle (vi. 15, 16).

In all the examples of faith adduced, the apostle of course has the instruction of his readers in view. And how suitable to the circumstances of the Hebrews was the case of Moses! They were exposed to similar temptations. Reproach and persecution assailed them on account of their profession of the gospel. Apostasy to Judaism or heathenism promised them many temporal advantages. Let them copy the example of Moses, and count even their sufferings for Christ greater riches than all the treasures of earth, which wilful dereliction of duty might enable them to gather. How applicable is the same lesson to us, and to Christians of every age!

Ver. 28. The celebration of the passover in the circumstances in which Moses was placed, furnished a striking proof of his faith and fearlessness. The rite was appointed by God; there was connected with it a promise of preservation from the stroke of the destroyer; and it was designed for a standing ordinance among the children of Israel. Moses, by observing it, manifested his faith in the promises of Jehovah, and his persuasion that the whole enterprise in which he was engaged would be crowned with success, although encompassed with so many perils.

It has been made a question whether *πεποιήκειν* refers to the observance of the passover on the particular occasion of the flight from Egypt, or to the institution of it as a standing ordinance among the people of God. Now undoubtedly *ποιέω* is used in the common Greek to denote the observing or performing of rites, like the Latin *facere sacra* (Herod. ii. 49, ix. 19). And it is employed by the Seventy to represent *עָשָׂה*, which bears the same signification. And we have undoubted examples of the same usage in Luke xxii. 19, 1 Cor. xi. 24; so that beyond a question it is the celebration of the passover, and not the institution of it, to which the apostle refers. *Πάσχα* is formed from the Hebrew name of the passover, *פֶּסַח*, which is most appropriate, because, according to its etymology, it means sparing,

passing over. *Πρόσχυσις* designates, not the effusion of the blood of the lamb, but the affusion or sprinkling of it upon the doorposts and lintels. *Ὁ ὀλοθρεύων* corresponds to the Hebrew *הַמַּחֲרִיף*, the destroyer, which describes the agent God employed in inflicting punishment upon the Egyptians (Ex. xii. 23). The fuller phrase employed in 2 Sam. xxiv. 16, *הַמַּחֲרִיף אֶת-הָעָם*, suggests the idea that it was an angel who struck the blow. *τὰ πρωτότοκα* is neuter, with some such word as *γεννήματα* understood, because it refers not merely to the first-born among men, whether male or female, but also among cattle. This accusative is governed by *ὀλοθρεύων*, and not, as Klee and Paulus suppose, by *θύγῃ*, which takes a genitive after it, and here accordingly is followed by *αὐτῶν*. *Αὐτῶν* has no expressed antecedent; but as the passover was not observed by Moses only, but also by all the people, it is exceedingly plain that it refers to the children of Israel.

The use of the perfect, *πεποίηκεν*, is attended with some difficulty. Böhme, Kuinöl, and Bleek, conceive the purpose of it to be to designate, both the observance of the passover, and also the institution of it as a permanent ordinance. But this lays a double burden upon *πεποίηκεν*, which it is hardly able to bear. It cannot express both ideas at one and the same time. Besides, if the use of the perfect were to point to the institution of the passover, this would imply that the ordinance continued in force till the time the apostle wrote. Another view, suggested by Theodoret and adopted by many, is, that Moses is said to have observed the passover in faith, because he saw in it the Christian passover and the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, which of course continue still in undiminished efficacy. It may be made a question, however, whether Moses knew so clearly the typical reference of the passover; and certainly, without ascribing to him any such knowledge, we see abundant exhibition of his faith, in the persuasion that the first-born of Israel were to be saved from the stroke of the destroyer, and the whole nation rescued from the bondage of Egypt. Still it is conceivable that the apostle might use the perfect tense, not to indicate that Moses saw the typical reference of the passover, but to express his own view of its relation to Christ our passover, sacrificed for us. Moses observed the passover; and he has thus done what stands

forth to our view as an exhibition of the great Paschal Lamb, sacrificed for the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, although at the time his mind was occupied exclusively with the deliverance from Egypt. There is another way in which perhaps the tense of *πεποίηκεν* may be accounted for. The 28th verse does not stand in chronological order. The 27th verse has already described the departure from Egypt. If therefore the apostle had said in ver. 28 *ἐποίησεν*, he would have seemed to affirm that the passover was celebrated after the people left Egypt, whereas it was before that event. And not only so, but circumstances connected with the celebration of the passover were the great means whereby the departure from Egypt was brought about. May not the 28th verse be designed, not merely as a historical statement in order, but rather as a going back to obtain a reason for the successful escape from bondage? Moses left Egypt—he and all the people got safely away; for by faith he has already observed the passover, and thus secured Jehovah's protection of Israel.

The examples cited by the apostle as illustrations of faith were all doubtless designed to suggest lessons to the Hebrews. And they could not fail, whatever might be the extent of knowledge possessed by Moses, to be reminded by the verse before us of the Lamb of God sacrificed for sin, and saving from destruction all who believe in Him. The sword of the destroyer can touch none who have been touched with the blood of Christ. They are the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven. It is the unbelieving and impenitent who are to be overwhelmed with irremediable ruin. Egypt's bondage is an image of the bondage of sin; and the cry which filled the land when the angel drew his unsparing sword, is an image of the wide-spread wail which the lost shall utter when destruction overtakes them.

Ver. 29. The passage of the Red Sea is next adduced as an exhibition of faith. The persons spoken of are the children of Israel, already brought into view in *αἱρών* of the preceding verse. Convinced by the miracles Moses had wrought, and especially by the salvation of their first-born from the stroke which desolated Egypt, they believed God, and with unhesitating step they marched forward into the sea. And Jehovah, in

whom they trusted, disparded the waters before them, so that they passed through on dry land, with walls of water towering above them on either side. What a bold attempt! What a marvellous result! What but God's promise could warrant the attempt? What but God's power could crown it with success? The miraculous character of the event is too plainly indicated, to allow any room for doubt consistently with the acknowledgment of inspiration. The idea of explaining it on mere natural principles is quite futile. How was an unprecedented ebb of the sea so singularly well timed? How could a strong wind, blowing back the sea, make the waters stand like a wall on both sides of the passing host? The act of passing is ascribed to the faith of the Israelites. This means, that they marched forward, because they believed God's word. But it means more. It means that, on account of their faith, God laid bare the bed of the sea. If they had not believed, the waters would not have separated for them any more than for the Egyptians. It was God who wrought the miracle; but the faith of the Israelites was requisite in order to its being performed (Ex. xiv. 11-22). So in the Gospels we find that our Lord sometimes refrained from working miracles, on account of the unbelief of His countrymen.

The change of construction from the accusative *θάλασσαν* to the genitive *ξηρᾶς*, has probably been occasioned by the words of the Seventy in Ex. xiv. 29, *ἐπορεύθησαν διὰ ξηρᾶς*. Very weighty authorities append *γῆς* to *ξηρᾶς*. No doubt *ξηρὰ* is frequently to be found as a substantive, denoting dry land; so that with equal propriety *γῆς* might be absent or present. That it is not in the Septuagint, in the passage supposed to have influenced the construction of this verse, affords an argument of some weight against its genuineness here. Bleek argues in its favour, that the omission of it can be readily accounted for, as it might be considered superfluous. But equally, on the other hand, it might be inserted by some one who remembered that *ξηρᾶς* was an adjective as well as a substantive. What is the antecedent to *ἧς*? Storr and Stuart say the idea of passing, *διαβῆναι*; but the gender of it clearly points to a feminine noun going before. Böhme, Kuinæl, and Klee fix upon *ξηρᾶς*; but this clause is a subordinate and explanatory one; and therefore

there can be no doubt that the reference is to *θάλασσαν*. The phrase *πείραν λαμβάνειν* is of frequent occurrence, and sometimes means "to make trial, to attempt;" sometimes also "to experience, to feel." The latter is plainly the meaning in ver. 36, and the former in the verse before us. Of the sea the Egyptians made trial. They attempted to do what the children of Israel had done, but they perished. They had no command from God to march into the sea; they had no promise of protection; and what they did was of course not done in faith. The sea, therefore, in obedience to natural laws, flowed back to its bed, and the Egyptians were swallowed up by its returning waters.

Ver. 30. The next two examples are taken from the book of Joshua. The first has reference to the whole people, like the one mentioned in ver. 29: *πίστει τὰ τεῖχη Ἱεριχώ ἔπεσε*—By faith the walls of Jericho fell. It is the faith of Joshua and of the children of Israel that is meant. They were commanded to march round the city, and assured that, after they had done so for a certain time, they should obtain possession of it; and believing this assurance, they followed the instructions given to them. *Κυκλωθέντα* has been supposed by Schleusner and Rosenmüller to describe the regular operations of a siege directed against the walls; but it is clear from Josh. vi. 12–20, that nothing of the kind took place. The people simply marched round the city, carrying with them the ark of the covenant, and blowing with trumpets. And the consequence was, that on the seventh day the walls fell down flat, overthrown by no human agency, but by the power of God. *Πίστει* is not connected with *κυκλωθέντα*, as Ernesti supposes, but with *ἔπεσε*. The object of the first clause is to connect the final result with faith, "By faith the walls fell;" and the second is added, to point out how the faith manifested itself. This verse and ver. 23 resemble one another, in not directly stating the persons whose faith is celebrated; but in neither case is there any room for doubt. The nature of the connection, too, between faith and the result, is considerably different here from what it is in most of the other examples. The result is not something which faith did, or to which it prompted, but it is something which God did, in order to reward the faith. It has been supposed by Semler and Dindorf, that the overthrow of the walls was effected by an

impetuous assault of the Israelites; but this idea runs directly in the teeth of the statements made by Joshua. Shouts and trumpets, and not military engines, were the only weapons employed. Maas and Maimonides have availed themselves of the help of an earthquake. But nothing of the kind is mentioned by Joshua. Even the supposition of an earthquake, however, would not remove the marvel; for the question would arise, How came this phenomenon to be so critically well timed? But the whole is a baseless conjecture. The language of Joshua implies that the walls fell down of their own accord, that is, without either human agency, or any visible instrumentality whatsoever.

Ver. 31. The last example in which an individual case is fully exhibited is that of Rahab. Many interpreters, both among Jews and Christians, have been led, by concern for the honour of religion, and the character of David's ancestors and Christ's, to maintain that she was not a harlot. The Hebrew *חַיִּית*, it has been said, may be viewed as derived from *אָת*, to feed, and may therefore denote a hostess; and the Greek *πόρνη*, as coming from *πενάω*, may bear the same signification. But it admits of no question, that both the Hebrew noun and the Greek are currently employed to designate a woman of loose character, and no example can be produced in which they bear the sense of hostess. The honour of religion is not tarnished by the sins individuals may have committed before conversion. It is what they do afterwards that brings a stain upon the faith which they profess. The more worthless their previous conduct may have been, the more signal is the triumph achieved in their reformation. Rahab had been a harlot at one time; but all that is mentioned regarding her after her admission into the congregation of the Lord redounds to her honour. Still, it may seem remarkable, that when there are so many distinguished individuals mentioned in the Old Testament, the apostle should have selected such a case as the one before us. His reason might be to point out the great encouragement which sinners have to forsake their evil courses; and also to remind the Hebrews that, even under the old economy, and much more under the new, Gentiles might be admitted to the favour of Jehovah. The outcast and abandoned of every age and

country, when such cases as those of Abel, and Enoch, and Abraham, and Moses, might fill them with despair, must turn with fond interest and hopeful hearts to what is said regarding Rahab and Mary Magdalene, and other great sinners. It is very remarkable, too, that James, although he specifies only two cases, selects that of Rahab in conjunction with that of Abraham, to support the principle of his epistle, that faith must be accompanied by works. Not improbably he might have the Epistle to the Hebrews under his eye; and his plan might be to choose the best and the worst of the cases there mentioned, so as to make it plain that in all cases works are indispensable. And the fact that two apostles thus speak in favour of Rahab, seems to make it plain, that whatever she was as a heathen, when she became an Israelite she pursued a totally different course. She married, and became one of the ancestors of the royal house of David (Matt. i. 5).

What was the object of Rahab's faith? It is mentioned in Josh. ii. 9-11. She believed that Jehovah, the God of Israel, was God in heaven above and in earth beneath, and that it was His purpose to put the Israelites in possession of Canaan; and the ground of her faith was the miraculous drying up of the Red Sea, and the manifest presence of more than mortal power in the Israelitish camp. And the faith of Rahab was shown in the reception which she gave to the spies, at the risk of exposing herself to the wrath of her countrymen. She received them in peace. She entertained them, she concealed them, she dismissed them in safety; and as the reward of her faith she was saved from the destruction which overwhelmed the inhabitants of Jericho, who continued unbelieving. *Ἀπειθήσαω* sometimes signifies disobedient, and sometimes disbelieving. The two ideas are closely connected, and they are both applicable to the people of Jericho, who shut their gates against Israel, because, notwithstanding the wonders which Jehovah wrought, they did not believe Him to be the true God. Perhaps, however, the contrast between *πίστευ* and *ἀπειθήσαω* requires that disbelieving or unbelieving should be the sense followed in this passage. And this sense is most suitable in another point of view. There was sufficient evidence to convince the Canaanites that Jehovah was the true God in heaven,

and upon the earth; but it is not so clear that a command was given to them to yield up their land to the Israelites. It is only in an indirect way, therefore, that their resistance could be described as disobedience. And there is no ground at all for supposing that ἀπειθήσων refers to their past conduct, and not to the time when the children of Israel appeared among them.

Ver. 32. The eight verses which follow present a brief exhibition of various other examples of faith, which were all subsequent to the settlement of the Israelites in Canaan, as those already mentioned were prior to that momentous era. They are arranged in two classes. First, in vers. 32-34, we find specimens of faith which manifested itself in vigorous and active efforts; and then, in vers. 35-38, we are introduced to cases where this divine principle shone forth in patient submission to dreadful sufferings. The apostle feels that he could not narrate all that was known of all the worthies of ancient times, without enlarging his epistle beyond all reasonable bounds. Therefore he now condenses the cases which crowd upon his recollection, and closes his illustrations of the mighty influence of faith with one great, magnificent picture, full of figures individually striking, and admirably disposed with regard to one another: καὶ τί ἔτι λέγω; ἐπιλείψει γὰρ με διηγούμενον ὁ χρόνος. Is λέγω in the subjunctive? The Vulgate translates it so. Yet the indicative is sometimes used in Greek, where the subjunctive appears in Latin; and it seems to be so here. The question, "What do I say more?" implies a positive statement on the part of the apostle, that he designs to bring his enumeration to a close. There is none of that conditionality which the subjunctive mood always more or less implies. And this view is supported by the circumstance that ἐπιλείψει is also in the indicative, and therefore does not state hypothetically, but positively, the want of time for giving all the details regarding other individuals of illustrious faith. Very similar phraseology is frequently to be found in the Greek classics, as in Demosthenes, *de Corona*: ἐπιλείψει με λέγοντα ἡ ἡμέρα τὰ τῶν προδοτῶν ὀνόματα. It is worthy of notice that the order of the words in this sentence of the prince of orators is the same as in the verse before us. Winer seems to imagine that no other arrangement could have been followed in the epistle on account

of the relative pronoun at the commencement of ver. 33; but this relative only requires that the list of names stand last in ver. 32, but does not necessitate the placing of *χρόνος* after *διηγούμενον*. The truth is, that several other arrangements might have been adopted, but the actual arrangement is the most musical; and this seems to have been the principle that guided both the Greek orator and our apostle to the same result.

The conjunctions coupling the six names enumerated are differently exhibited in different mss. As they stand in the received text, they are very beautifully arranged. Yet the two pairs *τέ, καί*, are not to be conceived as designating any special connection, like *et . . . et* in the sense of "both . . . and," but *τέ* here has the same force as *καί*; and the object of the writer seems to have been, not to mark some of the names as more closely connected together than others, but simply to avoid the repetition of the same conjunction so many times.

Chronological order is not followed in the sequence of the names. Gideon is named before Barak, though he flourished after him, probably because he was a more famous personage. Samson also is mentioned before Jephtha, it may be supposed on the same ground. And David, too, is introduced before Samuel, partly for the same reason, but mainly that Samuel might be placed in close juxtaposition with the prophets, at whose head, in respect to time, he is represented as standing in Acts iii. 24 and elsewhere.

The faith of the individuals here mentioned is conspicuously exhibited in the Old Testament. Gideon believed the announcement made to him by an angel, and confirmed by miraculous signs, "Know that I have sent thee;" and he destroyed the altars and groves of Baal, and with three hundred men routed a prodigious host of the Midianites. Barak, recognising the voice of God in the assurances of the prophetess Deborah, and overcoming the hesitation which at first restrained him from action, engaged in battle with the army of Sisera, and accomplished the deliverance of his country. Samson, believing that he had received his extraordinary strength for the purpose of chastising the enemies of Israel, entered into conflict with the Philistines, and achieved many signal victories over them.

Jephtha, taking the promises of God as his encouragement, and impelled by an influence from heaven, subdued the Ammonites, and rescued his countrymen from their oppressive yoke. And how marvellously was the faith of David displayed in his combat with the gigantic Goliath, and, indeed, during the whole course of his life, not only before he reached the throne, but after he became ruler of God's people! And Samuel's faith was conspicuous from his childhood to the day of his death: at no time was its brightness obscured by any such clouds as occasionally darkened the character of some other very eminent saints.

The question may be raised, whether all the individuals mentioned in this verse are to be viewed as not only having manifested trust in God on particular occasions, but also as having really been converted men. Some have repudiated the latter alternative, on account of the questionable subsequent conduct of Gideon, and Jephtha, and Samson; and have maintained that the faith spoken of is not necessarily to be viewed as saving faith. But does not the apostle conclude this chapter with the solemn declaration, that these all obtained a good report through faith; and do not the remarkable words which he employs in the last clause imply that they were destined to be raised to full and perfect happiness through the redemption completed under the new dispensation? Whatever, therefore, might be the faults of some of the individuals named, we must suppose either that their conduct was not so inconsistent with their position as the higher principles of the gospel make it appear in our eyes, or that they repented of their backslidings before they were removed from this earthly scene.

Ver. 33. The names of persons mentioned in ver. 32 are followed in vers. 33, 34, by an enumeration of deeds and events connected with them in a general way. Bengel and others have supposed that the several clauses which now follow correspond individually to the names already mentioned, and describe something connected with each of them in order; but the attempt to carry out this idea speedily demonstrates its futility. Some of the points which are brought into view apply equally to several of the persons specified; and others of them must be referred to individuals neither expressly named by

the apostle, nor yet included under the general designation of prophets. As the detailed exhibition of particular cases presented in the earlier part of the chapter is followed by a brief yet suggestive list of names; so again these names are followed by a condensed description of sundry remarkable achievements of faith, that the reader may have a glimpse of the boundless field from which illustrations might have been gathered, if time had permitted the prosecution of the subject. The names mentioned in ver. 32 are a mere specimen of those which the apostle had in his view; and hence, when he proceeds to specify deeds, the amplitude of his stores manifests itself in the ready occurrence of many others besides those of the persons named.

Διὰ πίστεως is equivalent to *πίστει* in the numerous examples already specified by the apostle, and describes faith as the moral power or principle by which the agents were enabled to perform their illustrious deeds. The phrase qualifies all the clauses as well as the first.

Ver. 33. *Οἱ διὰ πίστεως καταγωνίσαντο βασιλείας*—who through faith subdued kingdoms. Boehme understands these words to mean, “acquired kingdoms for themselves in war,” and conceives that, besides referring to conquests of an earthly kind, they allude to the struggles needful on the part of Christians to secure a heavenly kingdom. But *καταγωνίζομαι*, though it has a middle form, is always used with an active signification, and means simply to conquer or subdue, whether subsequent appropriation follows or not, as in Plutarch, *ἀπὸ Καίσαρος τοῦ καταγωνισαμένου Πομπήϊου* (*Num. c. xix.*). Doubtless not one case only, but several, were in the apostle’s view when he penned these words. Certainly they apply to Gideon, the first person mentioned in the preceding verse, who conquered the Midianites; but they are no less applicable to David, who subdued the Moabites, Ammonites, Idumeans, and Philistines; and they hold good in a particular manner of Joshua, who overthrew so many kingdoms in Canaan, and took possession of their territories. The subduing of kingdoms seems a less appropriate sphere for the exercise of faith than any other of the things mentioned by the apostle. The conqueror has generally been impelled by the lust of temporal renown, and his achievements have exhibited but one continued triumph of injustice. But

the wars to which our text refers were undertaken at the command of God, and were designed by Him to punish nations who had filled up the measure of their iniquity, and to put His own chosen people in possession of their promised inheritance. Joshua, and Gideon, and David, and all the heroes referred to, received instructions from Heaven as to their career; and when they drew the sword and executed their several commissions, their achievements were the fruit of faith. Saul spared where he was commanded to destroy, and this was reckoned an act of rebellion against the King of heaven. So Joash was blamed by Elisha for only smiting three times upon the ground, and thus restricting the overthrow which he was to be the instrument of inflicting upon Syria.

Εἰργάσαντο δικαιοσύνην is a general phrase, which in Acts x. 35 and Ps. xv. 2 describes a life of uprightness and integrity. In this sense obviously it would be applicable to all the saints of the old dispensation, without distinction; and accordingly Theodoret's remark is, *τοῦτο κοινὸν τῶν ἁγίων ἀπάντων*. This view is adopted by Erasmus, Grotius, and others. Yet, as all the other examples mentioned by the apostle exhibit something specific, the probability is, that this phrase also points to some particular manifestations of righteousness, such as the procedure of upright judges and kings. It is persons who occupied positions of eminence that are mainly referred to. Some by faith subdued kingdoms; others, under the influence of the same principle, executed justice and judgment. Examples of such integrity we find in the administration of Samuel, whose name is mentioned in the preceding verse, and also in the government of David and other kings and judges. A righteous ruler stays the arm of the oppressor, and extends the shield of his protection over the weak and defenceless. What a blessing is it to a community, when those who sit at the helm of affairs are regulated in all their procedure by a regard to the will of Heaven!

Ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιῶν—obtained promises. Two different courses are taken by interpreters in expounding these words. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Bengel, Bleek, and others, understand them to describe the simple receiving of promises; but Owen, Boehme, De Wette, and most others, view them as referring to the obtainment of the blessings themselves. Bleek argues

that the latter cannot be the apostle's meaning, because in vers. 13 and 39 he plainly says that the saints spoken of all died without having received the promise ; and it is alleged that he would hardly make two such apparently contradictory statements. But this reasoning is wholly devoid of force ; for the promises referred to in vers. 13 and 39 are promises relating to the Messiah and the blessings of His time, which of course were not fulfilled to any during the continuance of the old dispensation. But the events spoken of in the verse before us were all of an earthly kind, and occurred in the lifetime of the ancient saints. Abraham, and David, and Hezekiah, and others, though they did not witness the fulfilment of the Messianic promises, yet had many special promises accomplished in their own experience. And, in fact, the very words under consideration are applied to Abraham in the sense we contend for in chap. vi. 15, where we are told that, having received the promise of seed from God, he waited patiently, and in the end *ἐπέτυχε τῆς ἐπαγγελίας*, obtained the fulfilment of the promise, or the promised blessing, in the birth of Isaac. Nay, the passages appealed to by Bleek do themselves support this view ; for in both of them the word *ἐπαγγελία*, as he acknowledges, means not promise, but promised blessing. It admits of no doubt at all, therefore, that *ἐπέτυχον ἐπαγγελιών* means, obtained promised blessings. If it simply meant, "had promises given to them," how could this be described as a consequence of faith ? Faith follows promises, does not precede them. On this principle, it would be requisite to suppose that the individuals referred to first believed certain promises of God, and then, as the reward of that faith, had other and greater promises given to them. And doubtless cases of this kind may be found ; but they would not harmonize with the other particulars mentioned in the passage, which all describe deeds, acts, blessings, deliverances, triumphs, springing out of faith reposed in some promise. To make the clause under consideration homogeneous with the rest of the passage, we must view it as meaning, obtained promised blessings. And the reason why this is ranked among the triumphs of faith is, that the things promised were often such as seemed hardly within the range of probability, or even of possibility. Abraham believed

the promise of a son, and his faith was rewarded with the birth of Isaac. Deliverances were promised to the children of Israel on numerous occasions of extraordinary difficulty, and God broke from off their neck the yoke of their oppressors. The kingdom was promised to David when he was but a shepherd boy, and he was raised in due season to the throne. Recovery was promised to Hezekiah from a mortal sickness, and he was restored to health, and had fifteen years added to his life.

Ἐφράξαν στόματα λεόντων—stopped the mouths of lions. The chief reference of this clause doubtless is to Daniel, who, when thrown into the lions' den for his refusal to abstain from praying to his God, fell down unharmed among the furious beasts. They became like lambs when he appeared among them. Their mouths were stopped, and they could not touch him (Dan. vi. 17, 22, 23). Samson and David also were enabled to triumph over lions, and they may likewise have been in the apostle's view (Judg. xiv. 6; 2 Sam. xvii. 34); but his words are more exactly descriptive of the case of the prophet in Babylon. Indeed, Theodotian's rendering of Dan. vi. 22 exhibits the very same words as those before us: My God hath sent His angel, *καὶ ἐνέφραξε τὰ στόματα τῶν λεόντων*.

Ver. 34. *Ἐσβέσαν δύναμιν πυρός*—quenched the violence of fire. It is allowed on all hands that here the special reference is to the three companions of Daniel (iii. 23), who, rather than worship the golden image set up by Nebuchadnezzar in the plain of Dura, allowed themselves to be thrown into a burning fiery furnace. They had full confidence in the ability of Jehovah to protect them; but whether He were pleased to interfere for them or not, they were equally willing to die for the honour of His name. Their faith was not a persuasion that God would certainly rescue them, but only that He was able to do it, and would do it, if it were best to be done; and thus their courage and constancy shone out conspicuously. It seems, too, a not unwarrantable inference from their readiness to submit to death in so horrible a form, rather than be guilty of idolatry, that they must have known and believed the doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments. How could their confidence in divine promises support them amid the terrors of a scene which might prove their last upon earth, if they were left also to

believe that it might annihilate them for ever? Such faith as they exhibited could not exist apart from the conviction of invisible and eternal realities. And their faith, triumphant amid such difficulties, was well pleasing to Jehovah. It obtained an immediate and glorious reward. They were saved. They came out from the furnace unharmed. The apostle's language is strikingly appropriate. It is not said that they quenched the fire. The flame circled all around their persons, but it only fanned them like a mild and gentle breeze. It smote the men who threw them in, but it had no power even to singe their garments. Theophylact's remark is worthy of attention: οὐκ εἶπε δὲ ἔσβεσαν πῦρ, ἀλλὰ δύναμιν πυρός, ἧ καὶ μείζον· ἐξαπτόμενον γὰρ ὁμῶς δύναμιν τοῦ καίειν οὐκ εἶχε κατ' αὐτῶν.

Ἐφυγον στόματα μαχαίρας—escaped the edge of the sword. These words describe a safe escape from the sword after being exposed to its thrust, and not a timid flight from conflict. Not a few examples of a similar use of *φεύγω* are to be found, as in Herodotus, i. 65, Luke iii. 7, Heb. xii. 25. The plural *στόματα* may have reference to a double-edged sword, such as is mentioned at chap. iv. 13, or it may indicate that the apostle has several examples of deliverance in view. The use of *στόμα* in the sense of edge is grounded upon the Hebrew phrase *פִּי־חֶרֶב* (Judg. xviii. 27; 1 Sam. xxii. 19), and it is in conformity with the same figure that we ourselves speak of the sword as devouring. David might be one of the persons here referred to by the apostle, who was rescued repeatedly from the sword of Saul (1 Sam. xviii. 11, xix. 10, 12). Elijah also was protected wonderfully from the machinations of Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings xix.). And Elisha was saved, in God's providence, from the attempt made by Joram upon his life (2 Kings vi. 31). Elisha's faith, in particular, was conspicuous on the occasion of his deliverance: for the city where he was, was surrounded with horses and chariots in pursuit of him, but he feared not; "for," said he, "they that be with us are more than they that be with them" (2 Kings vi. 16).

Ἐνεδυναμώθησαν ἀπὸ ἀσθενείας—out of weakness were made strong. These words are susceptible of different applications, according as you attach to *ἀσθενείας* the idea of simple weakness

or of disease, both of which significations it bears. It has been alleged that, if recovery of health had been what the apostle meant, he would not have selected the word *ἐνδυναμόω*, which rather points to an augmentation of strength and power, but some such expression as *ἀνέστη ἐκ μαλακίας*, applied in the Septuagint to Hezekiah (Isa. xxxviii. 9). On the supposition that *ἀσθενείας* here means disease, there can be no question that Hezekiah's restoration from mortal malady must be the case meant by the apostle; and we may suppose that, not unnaturally, the addition of fifteen years to his life might suggest the use of such a word as *ἐνδυναμόω* in preference to one denoting mere recovery. On the other hand, if weakness giving place to strength be the specific idea which the apostle designs to suggest, then the case of Samson recovering his vigour after he had become weak like other men, must be the one mainly referred to (Judg. xvi. 28). Interpreters are very much divided between these two cases. On the one hand, it is argued with great force, that Hezekiah's recovery was undoubtedly connected with the fervent believing prayer which he offered to God while he lay with his face to the wall. But then it may be replied, that although Samson's reinvigoration seems to have kept pace with the growth of his hair, yet the very fervent supplication he made while standing between the pillars of Dagon's temple shows that he still trusted in God, and ascribed to Him all his strength. In these circumstances, the preferable course seems to be, to regard both cases as illustrations of the apostle's statement. Chrysostom, Theodoret, and the Greek fathers in general, conceive that the whole Jewish nation, brought back from Babylon and restored to their position as a people, are here pointed to. But to this it may be objected, that the cases spoken of throughout the chapter are all those of individuals. Besides, it is declared, after the enumeration of the heroes of faith is concluded, that they all obtained a good report, and looked forward to a state of glorification. But this could not be affirmed of the whole Jewish nation at any period of their history.

Ἐγενήθησαν ἰσχυροὶ ἐν πολέμῳ—were made strong in battle. The meaning of these words admits of no doubt, and there is no scarcity of persons in biblical history to whom they may be

applied. It is not all warriors, but pious warriors only, to whom the apostle points—men who were rendered valiant by the trust which they placed in Jehovah. Examples we find in Joshua, in many of the judges, in Jonathan and David (Ps. xviii. 34, 39). The royal Psalmist declares that God girded him with strength unto the battle, and taught his hands to war, so that a bow of steel was broken by his arms. Bleek conceives that it is the Maccabees who are here mainly referred to by the apostle; but although, doubtless, the features described are all to be found in them, viz. trust in God, and strength and fortitude directly springing from that trust, yet it does not seem likely that the apostle would pass over the whole inspired history of his country. The Maccabean heroes, however, might be in his view, in conjunction with those whom we have already mentioned out of the canonical books.

Παρεμβολὰς ἐκλιναν ἀλλοτρίων—turned to flight the armies of the aliens. In the later Greek, *παρεμβολή* denotes both an army and a camp. Of the latter signification instances are to be found in Heb. xiii. 11, 13; but the former is shown to be the one suitable to the passage before us, by the verb *ἐκλιναν*, which can only here mean, as it does in Homer (*Il.* v. 37), turn or put to flight. *Ἀλλοτρίων* means foreigners, with the accessory idea of their being enemies and strangers to the worship of the true God, as in Isa. i. 7, Jer. v. 19, Ezek. vii. 21, Ps. xviii. 4, liv. 5. The whole clause therefore is well rendered, put to flight the armies of the aliens; and it not only forms a most natural sequel to the one immediately before, but, as the last of the clauses descriptive of active effort, it is sonorous, and full, and triumphant, and finely closes the passage. The persons referred to may be the same as those whom the preceding clause contemplates. And, in particular, there are two cases (Judg. vii.; 1 Kings xiv.) recorded where armies of Midianites and Philistines encamped against Israel, and, dreading no danger, were assailed, the one by Gideon, and the other by Jonathan and his armour-bearer, and thrown into utter rout and confusion.

The next example is one of a different kind both from those already exhibited and from those which follow. It is not a case of patient and heroic endurance, like those we have yet to consider; nor is it a case of active and strenuous effort put forth

in faith, like those of the preceding verses. It resembles the preceding examples, however, in exhibiting visible and external rewards bestowed upon faith: *ἔλαβον γυναῖκες ἐξ ἀναστάσεως τοὺς νεκροὺς αὐτῶν*—women received their dead by resurrection; their deceased friends were restored to them *ἐξ ἀναστάσεως*, by being raised from the dead. *Ἐξ ἀναστάσεως*, in Rom. i. 4, describes the resurrection as the means whereby Christ was proved to be the Son of God; so here it describes resurrection as the means whereby dead individuals were restored to their friends. The women referred to are no doubt the widow of Sarepta, whose son was raised to life and restored to her by Elijah, and the Shunammite who obtained the same miraculous intervention in her favour from the hands of Elisha. In these scenes the faith of the prophets was more strikingly manifested than that of the mothers. Yet, as the mothers are mentioned by the apostle, and not the prophets, it is probably the faith of the mothers he means to hold up to view.

The faith of these mothers suggests to the apostle another instance of trust in God, whose results were of a totally different kind, yet such as furnished a more wonderful exhibition of the power of the divine principle which he is recommending. The case now adduced is the first of a series of cases, where faith, instead of obtaining rewards, was tried by exposure to death amid sufferings of dreadful severity, and triumphed through the hope of a resurrection to eternal life. The transition to cases of a different kind is marked by the word *ἄλλοι*. *Ἄλλοι δὲ ἐτυμπανίσθησαν, οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν, ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν*. It admits of no doubt that *τυμπανίζω* describes the infliction of death by means of some instrument of torture. Different views, however, have been entertained with regard to the precise nature of the instrument. Some suppose the tympanum to have been a weapon with which the sufferer was beaten till life became extinct. Others, with more probability, suppose that it was a machine resembling a wheel or drum upon which he was stretched, that the blows might be accompanied with more exquisite pain. Josephus, describing the martyrdom of Eleazar, which is recorded in 2 Macc. vi. 18–vii. 42, and to which there can be little doubt the apostle here refers, designates the instrument by which he

was put to death—*τροχός*, a wheel; and, at the same time, mention is made in Maccabees of blows having been inflicted upon him. The conclusion, therefore, follows that *τυμπανίζεσθαι* expresses the idea of being stretched upon some machine, probably of circular form, and then beaten with some weapon, till death closed the dreadful scene. Such horrid cruelties oppress the heart with sickness. The soul groans at the thought of the satanic ingenuity which persecutors and tyrants have displayed in contriving instruments of torture, and the inhuman barbarity which could bear to see them applied to their victims.

With regard to the clause *οὐ προσδεξάμενοι τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν*, Ernesti argues that it must mean, not hoping for deliverance, not hoping that God would rescue them from the grasp of their oppressors. But though it be true that *προσδέχομαι* means *expect* when applied to future events and objects, it is equally true that it means *accept* when spoken of things present and within reach, as in Heb. x. 34; and although it be true that *ἀπολύτρωσις* does mean deliverance through the intervention of another, and as the effect of a ransom, it is equally true that, like the verb *ἀπολύω*, from which it comes, it is employed to signify deliverance in general. The phrase, therefore, must mean here, not accepting deliverance when offered to them. This is the only sense which maintains any intelligible connection with the concluding clause of the verse. Ernesti's idea dislocates the whole sentence. This sense, too, harmonizes with the facts as recorded in ancient history. Deliverance was offered to Eleazar by his persecutors, on the condition that he apostatized from the worship of Jehovah, and partook of swine's flesh and other meats forbidden by the Jewish law. But he refused. *Αὐθαιρέτως ἐπὶ τὸ τύμπανον πρόσσηγε*. He chose death in preference to apostasy.

And what was the principle which proved adequate to the voluntary endurance of such fearful sufferings? It was faith. It was the firm persuasion that God would not forsake those who trusted in Him. The motive is expressed in the concluding clause of the verse: *ἵνα κρείττονος ἀναστάσεως τύχωσιν*. It admits of no question that the resurrection here spoken of is the resurrection of God's people from the dust of the grave to the enjoyment of eternal blessedness and glory in a new world.

The blessing was one expected after the total extinction of life amid the agonies of torture. What is the object with which comparison is made when the apostle designates this resurrection a better one? Some say the deliverance from torture offered and refused; but that would not have been a resurrection of the same kind. Doubtless such a comparison might have been made, and the merited preference would have lain where the apostle places it; for the resurrection he speaks of is infinitely preferable to any prolongation of life in this present world. But if anything more homogeneous can be found, we must adopt it as the key to unlock the rich stores of meaning treasured up in the apostle's words. Others have therefore suggested the resurrection of the wicked to shame and everlasting contempt spoken of by Daniel (xii. 2). But if this, in one respect, be nearer to the mark, in another it is immensely further away from it. True, it is a literal resurrection, but in no measure or degree is it a blessing, as the word *κρείττονος* employed by the apostle implies that the thing he refers to must be to some extent. Besides, there is nothing in what goes before to suggest this idea; and if it had been meant, it must necessarily have been stated in a more definite form. Here we have an example of seeking at a great distance what lies quite close at hand. Without a doubt, the resurrection of the sons of the two women mentioned in the preceding verse is what the apostle refers to. No other mode of bringing out the force of *κρείττονος* would ever have been thought of, excepting by men who questioned the reality of the miracles performed by Elijah and Elisha in restoring to life the sons of the widow of Sarepta and of the Shunammite. That was a literal resurrection: they had both been dead, but through the intervention of divine power they were presented alive to their mothers by the prophets of the Lord. It was also a positive blessing, the preciousness of which can be appreciated by those who have mourned the premature decease of the children whom they have loved, as David did, more than their own life. But still it was a small blessing compared with the resurrection of the just at the last day. It was restoration to a life amid the chequered scenes of this world, which a few more years must necessarily once more bring to an end. The sons of the widow of Sarepta and of

the Shunammite, Lazarus and the son of the widow of Nain, have long since gone the way of all living ; but when the righteous are raised by the power of their Lord from the dust of the grave, they shall be endowed with an immortality which no second stroke of death shall ever be able to touch. This passage shows the groundlessness of an idea which has often been advanced, that the sanctions of religion under the old economy were all of a temporal kind, and that the ancient saints knew nothing either of the immortality of the soul or of the resurrection of the body. It is vain to say that the words of the apostle describe simply his view of what the remote result would be. They are manifestly designed to describe the motive or principle by which the sufferers were actuated when they refused deliverance at the price of apostasy. Besides, it is historically certain, independently of the words of the apostle, that the persons spoken of really did anticipate a glorious resurrection ; for we are assured in 2 Macc. vii. 9—which, though not canonical Scripture, is an authentic history penned long before the Christian era—that they said, *ὁ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου βασιλεὺς ἀποθάνοντας ἡμᾶς . . . εἰς αἰώνιον ἀναβίωσιν ζωῆς ἡμᾶς ἀναστήσει.* These indeed are not the words of Eleazar, whose case is more particularly referred to in this verse ; but they are spoken by the seven brothers and mother, who, animated by Eleazar's example, and actuated by the same principles, cheerfully encountered death rather than be guilty of apostasy.

The latter half of the 35th verse makes a transition from cases where faith had obtained illustrious rewards, to cases where it manifested its presence and power by the patient endurance of all manner of trials. This transition is marked by the words *ἄλλοι δέ.* At the beginning of the 36th verse the apostle uses the words *ἕτεροι δέ,* to introduce a subdivision of the suffering cases on which he has now entered. They differ less from the one immediately preceding, than both differ from those first mentioned. Why then does the apostle use here *ἕτεροι,* which is generally employed to indicate a greater difference than *ἄλλοι* ? He might use *ἕτεροι* to avoid repetition. Perhaps also *ἕτεροι* is more appropriate in this place, because the sentence is so constructed, that very various kinds of sufferings are ranged under it, without the intervention of any new nominative. "*Ἄλλοι*

is the nominative only to *ἐτυμπανίσθησαν*; but *ἕτεροι* stands connected with all the verbs and participles down to the close of the 38th verse. The cases are not more different generically, but there is a greater amount of specific variety.

The first cases of suffering now adduced seem to be of a comparatively slight character: *ἐμπαυγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πείραν ἔλαβον*, *ἔτι δὲ δεσμῶν καὶ φυλακῆς*. The phrase *πείραν ἔλαβον* has two significations in good Greek. Sometimes it is more active, meaning to make trial, to attempt; and this was the signification which we found it to bear in ver. 29. At other times, however, it has a more passive acceptation, and signifies "to receive trial, to have the experience of," which is manifestly the sense in the verse before us. De Wette understands *ἐμπαυγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων* to mean, "death inflicted amid reproaches, and by means of scourging;" and the main argument which he adduces in defence of this interpretation, is the supposition that the apostle refers to the case of the seven brothers and mother, described in 2 Macc. vii. 1-10, immediately after the martyrdom of Eleazar upon the tympanum. And certainly the words *ἐμπαυγμός* and *ἐνεπαίζετο* occur there, and mention is also made of scourging. The language might therefore be suggested to the apostle by that passage, as it is obvious from the preceding verse that it was under his eye. But the words which he actually uses cannot mean more than reproaches and scourgings. This is obvious in itself, and it is proved also by the phrase *ἔτι δὲ* following, which marks an ascent or climax. Now, what is the higher object that is now brought into view? It is *δεσμῶν καὶ φυλακῆς*, bonds and imprisonment. This whole verse, therefore, is undoubtedly designed to exhibit sufferings of a comparatively light kind. And there are many examples recorded in Scripture, of reproaches and stripes, of bonds and imprisonment, endured by the worshippers of Jehovah, with patience, and unshaken trust in the promises of Scripture. The apostle might have them all in view, or particular cases might stand more prominently before his mind. Elisha and Samson were mocked; the seven brothers mentioned in Maccabees were both mocked and scourged; Jeremiah endured bonds and imprisonment, and so also did Micah the son of Imla.

Ver. 37. The enumeration continues of the various sufferings

endured by the parties included under the word *ἐρεποι*. It may hardly be possible to find in the canonical Scriptures examples corresponding to each of the particular descriptions here; but doubtless instances of them all were known to the apostle, and traces of them have been handed down among the Jews. Amid the numerous persecutions to which the people of God were exposed in ancient times, it can be doubted by none that all these cruelties, and probably many others, were practised by the ungodly tyrants who sought to extirpate the worship of Jehovah. In a sentence constructed like the present, although the verbs be all put in the plural, it does not of course follow that a plurality of persons is indicated by each individual word. There may have been only a single instance of some of the cruelties specified.

Ἐλιθάσθησαν—they were stoned. Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada the priest, was put to death in this manner, at the command of king Joash, for the zeal which he displayed against the idolatry practised in Jerusalem (2 Chron. xxiv. 20; Matt. xxiii. 35). It was also commonly believed among the Jews, that Jeremiah was stoned to death at Daphne, in Egypt; and Tertullian makes mention of this in his work against the Gnostics, and so also does Epiphanius.

Ἐπρίσθησαν—were sawn asunder. That this mode of inflicting death upon captives was practised among the Jews in ancient times, appears from 2 Sam. xii. 31 and 1 Chron. xx. 3. No case of martyrdom of this kind is recorded in the Old Testament; but it has always been regarded as an undoubted fact among the Jews, that Isaiah was subjected to this horrible cruelty by Manasseh, in his days of abominable wickedness. Many of the Christian fathers make mention of the martyrdom of the evangelical prophet; and Jerome calls it *certissima traditio*, as also do the Talmud and the later Rabbins; and there seems no ground for doubting the fact (Suicer, *Theo.* ii. p. 831).

Ἐπειράσθησαν—were tempted. This is a very perplexing word, not as being obscure in itself, but because it is difficult to see why it is introduced in the connection where it stands. Stoning and sawing asunder preceded, death by the sword follows; and in the midst of these specific kinds of deadly

violence, the indefinite and general idea of being tried or tempted appears. Almost with one consent, therefore, interpreters have cashiered this word; and they have given loose rein to conjecture, with the view of amending the text. Many look upon *ἐπειράσθησαν* as a gloss which has sprung from *ἐπίσθησαν*, and thus obtained admission into the text; or they suppose that *ἐπίσθησαν* was twice written by some transcriber through mistake, and that the second occurrence was altered to *ἐπειράσθησαν*. Others imagine that for *ἐπειράσθησαν* the apostle must have written some similar but more definite word, and therefore they would expunge it altogether; and *ἐπυράσθησαν*, *ἐπυράσθησαν*, *ἐπηρήσθησαν*, *ἐπυρίσθησαν*, *ἐπερήσθησαν*, and others, have been suggested as candidates for the place alleged to be vacant (Stu. 500). There is not, however, a particle of evidence for any one of these conjectures. It may seem improbable that the apostle should have introduced such a word as *ἐπειράσθησαν* in the position which it occupies; but the MSS. authority in its favour is absolutely overwhelming. It is only wanting in a very few ancient documents. Whatever, therefore, be the difficulties connected with it, we dare not displace it, as Schulz, Böhme, and Delitzsch propose. Were the testimonies for and against it equally balanced, then the apparent unsuitableness of it might be allowed to turn the scale; but supported as it is by decisive evidence, it would be most dangerous and presumptuous to expunge it. No course remains, therefore, but to regard it as an apostolic dictum. There is one consideration, which supplies an argument of some force against the idea of its extreme unsuitableness. It is in keeping with the mixture which has already been presented of cases of very different degrees of severity. For example, between beating to death upon the tympanum, and stoning to death, we have found introduced the comparatively mild infliction of reproaches and scourges, bonds and imprisonment. Why then, between sawing asunder and killing with the sword, may not such an idea as that expressed by *ἐπειράσθησαν* also be presented, the more especially as it probably refers to what took place in the very midst of these dire sufferings? While the people of God were led forth to execution, they were often tempted to apostasy, by having the offer of deliverance made to them, on the condition of forsaking

Jehovah's worship. It has been conceived that *ἐπρίσθησαν*, on the principle of paronomasia, might suggest *ἐπειράσθησαν* to the apostle's mind. Now, were the idea utterly inharmonious with the other parts of the picture, we could not for a moment adopt this explanation. But if the idea of being tempted or tried be quite consistent with the colouring of the picture as a whole—as who can doubt it is?—then the principle of paronomasia might be the reason why it was put into this particular place. *Ἐπρίσθησαν*, “they were sawn,” and, in being so treated, *ἐπειράσθησαν*, “they were tried;” and they were tempted to apostasy by the offer of deliverance which was made to them.

Ἐν φόνῳ μαχαίρας ἀπέθανον—they died by slaughter of the sword. In the 34th verse, mention is made of escaping the sword, but here the instrument of death is conceived as accomplishing its work, and in both cases faith triumphs. In the one, the believer is carried through difficulties by his unshaken confidence in God; in the other, meeting difficulties, he submits to death rather than disown his Lord. The principle is the same, though the result is different, because God tries His people in different ways. The phraseology is moulded after Ex. xvii. 13, Deut. xiii. 15, xx. 13, Num. xxi. 24, where *ἐν φόνῳ μαχαίρας* is employed by the LXX. to represent *בְּחֶרֶב*, elsewhere rendered *ἐν στόματι μαχαίρας*. Examples of the kind of martyrdom here described are abundant in Scripture. Saul slew the priests of the Lord in Nob (1 Sam. xxii. 18). Elijah mentions that the children of Israel had slain God's prophets with the sword (1 Kings xix. 10). Manasseh filled Jerusalem with innocent blood (2 Kings xxi. 16). Jehoiakim slew Urijah, and treated his dead body with disgrace (Jer. xxvi. 23).

Now follows a number of circumstances, descriptive of privations and sufferings short of death, which were endured by many of the people of God at sundry periods: *περιήλθον ἐν μηλωταῖς ἐν αἰγέλοις δέρμασιν*. Because *μῆλον* is applied to small cattle in general, whether sheep or goats, it has been concluded that *μηλωταῖς* here must mean the skins of both kinds of animals; and it has consequently been inferred by Heinsterhusius and others, that *ἐν αἰγέλοις δέρμασιν* must be viewed as a gloss, and by Bleek, Delitzsch, and others, that it is designed by the apostle as an exhibition separately, and for the sake of

emphasis, of an idea already expressed in *μηλωταῖς*: in the skins of small cattle, yea, in the skins of goats. The reason for stamping the last words as a gloss is utterly inadequate to sustain the conclusion. The accuracy of the reading stands above question. And with regard to the notion of Bleek, that *μηλωταῖς* is generic, and *αἰγέλοις δέρμασιν* specific, the latter being appended with the view of exhibiting the rougher part of the former, it has but little to recommend it. A far more natural view of the subject is, that *μηλωταῖς* is used in the sense which it undoubtedly bears, of sheepskins. True, there is no conjunction between the two words; but this circumstance is quite in keeping with the whole structure of the passage, which exhibits a great variety of incidents and objects clustered together without connecting particles. Who would infer, from the close juxtaposition of the three participles which follow, that they are not co-ordinate, but progressively more limited in range? Sheepskins and goatskins with the wool and hair upon them were frequently worn by the poorer classes of the community; and the prophets also sometimes appeared in the same garb. Elijah had a dress of this kind, and it is with reference to it that he is designated a rough and hairy man. Elisha also, and Ezekiel, were similarly attired. The clause describes the individuals to whom it refers as tried by poverty, as having no certain dwelling-place, as obliged to consult their safety by frequent change of abode. Sinful compliances might have warded off the stroke of adversity from them, but their faith impelled them to endure all sorrows rather than sacrifice their principles.

ῥστερούμενοι, θλιβόμενοι, κακουχούμενοι: these words are heaped together to indicate the variety of troubles with which the wanderers were afflicted. *ῥστερούμενοι* expresses the idea of enduring privations, of wanting the most ordinary comforts and necessities of life; *θλιβόμενοι* points to afflictions and tribulations, without specially indicating their immediate source; *κακουχούμενοι*, on the other hand, suggests the idea of maltreatment directly inflicted by the hands of men. They are pretty accurately represented by the English words *destitute, afflicted, maltreated*.

The contrast between the character of the persons of whom

he is speaking, and the extraordinary distresses and persecutions which they encountered, wrings from the apostle a parenthetical exclamation: *ὧν οὐκ ἦν ἄξιος ὁ κόσμος*. They appeared to the world as the offscourings of all things, but they were men of whom the world was not worthy. Böhme, Kuinoel, Klee, and Ebrard, connect this clause exclusively with what follows: men of whom the world was not worthy, wandered in deserts. In this case, however, we should have expected not a participle, *πλανώμενοι*, but a finite verb. Without a doubt, *πλανώμενοι*, like the three preceding participles, stands connected with *περιήλθον*; and therefore *ὧν οὐκ ἦν ἄξιος* must refer to the subject of this verb, and not to one of the dependent participles more than to another. It is an exclamation thrown in in the midst of an enumeration of the sorrows and trials endured by godly men. And what does it mean? Chrysostom and Theophylact say its sense is, that the world was not worthy of being compared with them—that they were of more value than the whole world. But in the New Testament, when *ἄξιος* is employed to indicate price or comparative value, it is followed by *πρός*, worth in respect to. On the other hand, when followed by a genitive, it usually means, deserving of; and this, without a doubt, is the meaning in the clause before us. The world treated God's people with contempt and scorn, and drove them from its society as unworthy members; but, so far were they from being unworthy of a place in the world, that the world was unworthy of having them as members of it. Their destined sphere was a higher region than earth; and amid all the sorrows and tribulations of time they were supported by the glorious prospect of another, a better country, even an heavenly. And the world, by its persecution of them, both manifested its own guilt and wickedness, and put away from it what was fitted to exert the most beneficial influence upon its state and interests. The righteous are the salt of the earth, the conservative principle of society: for want of a sufficient number of pious individuals, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed.

Ἐν ἐρημίαις πλανώμενοι, καὶ ὄρεσιν, καὶ σπηλαίοις, καὶ ταῖς ὁπαῖς τῆς γῆς. Here we have additional circumstances descriptive of the sufferings which were endured by the true

worshippers of Jehovah. Driven from the society of men for their refusal to comply with sinful customs, they sought refuge in deserts and mountains, and dens and caves of the earth: *σπηλαίοις* and *ὀπαῖς* denote in general the same thing, but the former seems to refer to large caverns consisting of yawning rocks, and the latter to smaller holes or caves in the ground. Not a few examples are there in sacred history of recourse being had to such places for safety. David fled to the wilderness from the persecutions of Saul. Elijah sought refuge in the desert from the deadly rage of Jezebel. Obadiah hid the hundred prophets of the Lord, fifty in one cavern and fifty in another. And in the days of Antiochus, the Jews were obliged to flee to the most secluded places, that they might escape his fury, and practise in secret the rites of their religion. How much alike is the spirit of persecution in every age! Were not our own forefathers, during the dark days of prelacy, obliged to retreat, unless disposed to sacrifice their principles, to moors and mountains? and how often was the worship of God conducted, far from the haunts of men, in glens and moorland solitudes, while outposts were stationed on some neighbouring height to watch lest dragoons and troops break in upon them!

Vers. 39 and 40 present a general statement with regard to the heroes of faith, which is involved in great difficulty, and suggests many curious questions. Almost every word has been the fruitful source of difference of opinion. *Οὗτοι πάντες* has been supposed by Schlichting and Hammond to refer only to the persons mentioned in the three preceding verses, who suffered on account of their faith without obtaining deliverance, as the persons mentioned before them had done. In defence of this restriction, it is adduced as an argument that they are said not to have received the promise. This argument, however, takes it for granted that *οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν* means "obtained not temporal deliverance," as the others had done; but it is forgotten that similar language is applied, even to those others, as in ver. 13: *μὴ λαβόντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας*. The argument, therefore, is altogether inconclusive; and, indeed, no good reason can be assigned why *οὗτοι πάντες*, following a long list of names and persons, should not be understood as applicable to the whole series.

The meaning of *μαρτυρηθέντες διὰ πίστεως*, which has already occurred, is obvious. It intimates that the persons spoken of had obtained a good report through faith. They were honoured to receive a place in sacred history, and their faith was the principle which led them so to act as to receive commendation from God.

The next clause has been far more contested: *οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν*. One point indeed admits of no question, that the thing meant is not the simple receiving of a promise, but the obtaining of the promised blessing. Ancient saints anticipated the fulfilment of the promise, but it came not in their day. And what is the special promise referred to? What can it be but the great promise of the old dispensation, the promise of the Messiah? *Τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν* in the singular, with the definite article, with no other qualifying word, can hardly mean anything else. Still the question presents itself, whether it be Christ's first coming, with all its attendant blessings, that is meant, or His second advent, to complete the happiness of His people by raising their bodies from the dust of death, and admitting them to endless glory. Now, in defence of the latter view, appeal has been made to chap. x. 36, where the apostle says to Christians, "Ye have need of patience, that, having done the will of God, *κομίσησθε τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν*." But although it be quite true that such language addressed to men under the new dispensation cannot refer to the first coming of Christ, which was already past, it is equally obvious that similar language spoken with regard to men under the old dispensation, particularly when put into a past tense, *οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο*, can only refer to the first advent of the promised deliverer. In the case before us, too, the contrast between ancient saints and men living under the new economy is quite conclusive. *Οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο* describes something which might be spoken of the fathers, but did not at all apply to Christians. They received not the promise, but we under the gospel have already obtained it. Christ has come, and has actually wrought out the expected deliverance. If the reference were to the final glorification of saints, as some contend, then wherein would lie the difference between believers of later and of earlier times? At least manifestly there would be no difference stated in the passage before us.

It is equally true of all saints, from the beginning to the end of time, that they must wait for the resurrection of their bodies, and their final glorification of both soul and body, till the Son of God make His second appearance in the clouds of heaven.

What follows, viz. τοῦ Θεοῦ περὶ ἡμῶν κρεῖττόν τι προβλεψαμένου, is introduced in the shape of a reason why believers under the law obtained not the promise (God having from the first provided something better for us). They fell short of it, because it was God's purpose that we should enjoy a certain advantage. Προβλεψαμένου describes God as looking forward from the beginning to the fulness of time, and preparing in regard to those then living something which had never been enjoyed before. This verb corresponds exactly to the Latin *provideo*, which signifies not so much to foresee as to provide.

And what are we to understand by κρεῖττόν τι? First of all, two modes have been proposed of estimating the force of the comparative degree,—either something better than we should otherwise have obtained, or something better than the ancient saints enjoyed. Now the latter view seems certainly to be the correct one. For although our Lord had come to this world a thousand years sooner than He did, and thus many of the ancient saints had obtained the promise, the blessings of the gospel would not have been one particle smaller to us, just as they will not be smaller to those who come upon the stage of life a thousand years after our time. The natural sun maintains his brightness and warmth from age to age, and so does the Sun of righteousness. All who live under the gospel, let their distance from the dawn of its light be ever so great, obtain κρεῖττόν τι, something better than those who lived under the law. And what is the better thing which thus comes into their possession? Manifestly it must be that of which οὐκ ἐκομίσαντο τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν is the negative. In short, it is the fulfilment of the great evangelical promise given to Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. It is the actual appearance of the Messiah to impart clearer light, to complete the work of expiation, and to bestow the more abundant influences of His Spirit. "Blessed," says Christ to His disciples, "are the eyes which see the things that ye see; for I say unto you, that many prophets and kings desired to see those things which ye see, and saw them not, and

to hear those things which ye hear, and heard them not" (Luke x. 23).

And now follows the last clause, *ἵνα μὴ χωρὶς ἡμῶν τελειωθῶσιν*, which is the most difficult of all. The view to be taken of these words will mainly depend upon the shade of meaning assigned to *τελειόω*. This word signifies, in general, to make perfect. It is sometimes employed to describe the complete expiation which Christ has made for sin. It is used to designate the moral and spiritual change which believers must undergo (Phil. iii. 12) in order to fit them for heaven. And it is also applied to the state of perfect happiness and glory which awaits the followers of Christ when they leave this world. One or other of these ideas comes most prominently into view, according to circumstances. When our Lord Himself is spoken of as *τετελειωμένος*, of course it is obvious that the ideas of pardon and sanctification are altogether excluded; and the simple meaning is, either that He was made a perfect Saviour through sufferings, as in Heb. ii. 10, or that He was elevated to glory and power as the reward of His sufferings, as in Heb. v. 9, vii. 28. When believers are described as *τέλειοι*, but not yet *τετελειωμένοι* in this world, the meaning is, that they are pardoned, and in a measure sanctified. When reference is made to the state of believers after death, the meaning seems to be, that as pardoned and sanctified men they are elevated to a state of blessedness and glory. Now this seems to be the shade of meaning which the word must here bear; and the comparison made between ancient believers and Christians seems to imply, that whatever progress they might have made while on earth, they were not after death elevated at once to the position of *τετελειωμένοι*. The doctrine taught by the apostle appears to be, that down to the period when the great promise was fulfilled, and Christ actually made His appearance to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself, those who died looking forward to that wonderful consummation required still to wait in their separate state for something which was needed to complete their happiness. They were not made perfect—*χωρὶς ἡμῶν*. And the advantage which Christians enjoy is, that since Christ has now actually come, when they die they are at once made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory. What might be

the condition of departed saints under the law, we know not; what might be wanting to them that was needful to their *τελειωσις*, we cannot tell. Some have imagined that they were preserved in an intermediate region, where they enjoyed comparative happiness, and waited for the fulfilment of the promise, which had not taken place while they were on earth; and this view seems to receive some countenance from the declarations of the apostle, that it was Christ's blood which first opened up a way into the holiest of all, there being no such way while the first tabernacle was yet standing. According to this view, we must suppose that, when our Lord came and performed His appointed work of expiation, there would take place a great change upon the state of departed saints. Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob would derive an immediate accession of benefit from it; and be brought, along with those who should now die in faith, into the position of *τετελειωμένοι*, which they could not reach previously without us, *χωρὶς ἡμῶν*. It is conceived by some that ancient believers were now first admitted into heaven, the way into the holiest of all being thrown open by Christ. The subject is a very obscure one; and it would be wrong to decide about it so dogmatically as the Eastern Church has done, who settled the geography of the residence of Old Testament saints, and called it *Limbus Patrum*. In general, however, it seems allowable to conclude, that those who died before Christ entered into a state where they still looked forward to the fulfilment of the promise, and where they actually did receive some great accession of benefit after the triumphant exclamation was uttered upon the cross: "It is finished; it is finished!" Unless something like this be supposed, it is difficult to see what the apostle means, when he speaks of the benefits enjoyed by believers under the new dispensation. For he does not simply say that we in our lifetime possess advantages which were not granted to them while they were alive. This is quite true, but it is something more than this that is affirmed. The ancient saints, dying before the promise was fulfilled, needed to wait for their *τελειωσις* till the Christian era commenced.

A somewhat different view of the passage has been taken by many, who refer *τελειωθῶσιν* to the final glorification of saints, when their bodies are raised from the tomb, when they

are openly acquitted at the day of judgment, and when they enter, in the full equipment of humanity, upon their eternal rest. That the word might be employed to describe the perfect state succeeding the resurrection, admits of no doubt. But there are sundry considerations which raise up a barrier against this view of the passage. The most prominent feature in the verse, is the contrast which it makes between Old Testament saints and those who live under the gospel: there is some advantage which the latter enjoy above the former. But if the apostle be referring to the resurrection and the second advent of our Lord, then in this respect there is no advantage or precedence at all. True, it is said in 1 Thess. iv., the dead in Christ shall rise first; but this refers to all dead believers, as compared with those who shall be alive when our Lord appears. The dead of all ages and dispensations shall rise together. Where, then, is the advantage of New Testament saints spoken of by the apostle? Piscator and Limborch allege that it lies in this, that if the Old Testament saints had received their *τελειώσις* in the sense supposed, and thus the drama of human affairs had been closed, then we should never have been born at all, and consequently have missed the glories of redemption. But manifestly the prevention of this result could never be represented as a higher advantage, something beyond what our predecessors received. If the final resurrection and glorification of believers, therefore, be what is meant, then the saints of all ages stand quite similarly related to it, only some are nearer to it than others. We are nearer than our fathers were; they were nearer than their predecessors; David was nearer than Abraham, and Abraham than Abel. But there is no sharp distinction between believers who preceded Christ and those who have lived since. There is no other distinction, in regard to the point in hand, between the ancients and us, than there was between some of them and others of them.

We feel constrained, therefore, to abide by the view which refers *τελειωθῶσι* to the perfection to which believers are raised after death. All who live under the gospel enjoy an advantage over those who lived before that time. We look to a Saviour who has already come, we receive higher and clearer instruction, we are furnished with more abundant means for

sanctification, and at death we pass immediately into a state of glory. The ancient saints knew only of a Saviour who was expected, they were involved in comparative darkness; and when they died, they were not made perfect till the commencement of the Christian era: they had to wait in the separate state for their *τελείωσις*. We require not to wait at all. In this view there is a definite and well-marked distinction between those who preceded and those who follow Christ.

The two concluding verses were fitted to make a powerful impression upon the Hebrews. What faith was manifested by the ancients, notwithstanding the disadvantages of their position! What bright examples of trust in God does their history furnish! What, then, may be expected of us with all our superior advantages! Oh, should we not live to the praise and honour and glory of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light?

CHAPTER XII.



ADMONITIONS are scattered through every part of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but it is at chap. x. 19 that the doctrinal completely gives place to the practical, and exhortations and warnings and encouragements begin to flow in one continuous stream. Towards the close of that chapter the apostle has occasion to speak of faith as the principle of the Christian life; and by way of illustrating its nature and mode of operation, he subjoins that long list of examples of faith, gathered from Old Testament times, which constitutes chap. xi. of our epistle. It is a magnificent gallery of portraits painted to the life, and furnishes a marvellous demonstration of the power of faith, as a principle both of action and of patient endurance. What follows now in the first eleven verses of the 12th chapter is an admonition specially grounded upon the examples thus exhibited. These astonishing facts are fraught with precious instruction and encouragement. If all history is philosophy teaching by example, the inspired history of eminent saints must be the divinest philosophy which the annals of the world can furnish. In the first three verses of the chapter, the apostle conceives the Christian life as a race; and the conduct and experience of God's people in the days that are past, are moulded into an argument to enforce upon us the duty of running with all earnestness and effort. This figure is of frequent occurrence in the writings which bear Paul's name (1 Cor. ix. 24; Rom. ix. 16; Gal. v. 7; Phil. ii. 16; 2 Tim. iv. 8), and we have thus another added to the numerous coincidences of our epistle with Pauline ideas and expressions. The figure was well adapted to make an impression upon the Greeks, among whom public

contests on the race-course had long been favourite amusements; and it was equally suitable in an appeal to the Jews, as similar games had been introduced among them by the Herodian family.

Vers. 1-8. *Τοιγαροῦν καὶ ἡμεῖς*. It has been well observed that *τοιγαροῦν*, a full and sonorous conjunction, which occurs only another time in the New Testament, and that in Paul's writings, is most happily chosen here, as marking the commencement of a lengthened admonition grounded upon the long list of cases already detailed. *Καὶ* refers to these cases, and means that we *also*, like the ancients, should rouse ourselves to action. There is in our version an unhappy transposition of the words, which puts a sentiment into the verse that is not in the original. "Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about with a cloud of witnesses." This implies that the ancients, too, had been surrounded with witnesses during their struggles. Although this may have been the case, yet no such sentiment is expressed in the original. The meaning is: Wherefore let us also, seeing we are surrounded with witnesses, run.

Τοσοῦτον ἔχοντες περικείμενον ἡμῖν νέφος μαρτύρων. There are many examples in the Greek authors of *νέφος* used to denote a multitude. The persons referred to without a doubt are the ancient believers, whose achievements and sufferings are recorded in the preceding chapter. They are designated *μαρτύρων*. The Greek word *μάρτυς*, like our own term witness, sometimes means persons who bear testimony to a truth or fact previously known to them, and sometimes it means persons who are present to behold what is done, whether they give evidence regarding it or not. According to the former view, the term would refer to ancient believers, as having borne testimony by their lives and by their death to God's faithfulness and truth. According to the latter, it would represent them as present to behold the struggles and conflicts of believers, their own race having been long since successfully finished. In favour of the latter view decisive evidence is furnished by the phrase *περικείμενον ἡμῖν*, which represents the crowd of witnesses as placed around the Hebrews during their struggle, and the idea of their presence is employed to stimulate the followers of Christ to unfaltering zeal and effort. Still, however, the question may be raised, whether this passage

really teaches that departed saints continue to know and to take an interest in what is done upon the earth ; or whether the apostle's representation is merely to be viewed as part of the machinery employed to complete the representation of a scene of contest. At the Olympic games there was the course, there was the goal, there were runners, there were judges, there were spectators. The Christian life, too, is a race, and the apostle surrounds the course with a crowd of spectators ; but are we warranted, from such a figurative description, to infer that Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Gideon, and Barak, and Samson, and David, and Samuel, are actually present to behold us, while we strain every nerve to reach the goal ? Such a conclusion might be more than the passage could well sustain. Yet the crowd of spectators must mean something ; otherwise the apostle employs a motive which, after all, is a mere fancy. Does it not then seem necessary to suppose, that although departed saints may not actually be standing around us to watch our movements, yet through some channel or other they are acquainted with the course which we are pursuing ? If the apostle had simply said, that while running the race set before us, we should imagine ourselves to be surrounded by the saints of bygone days, and strive to act as we would do if they were really present ; then we should have understood that he did not mean to insinuate that they really knew anything of what we were doing. His language is altogether different from this. He says we ought to run with alacrity, because we have a multitude of invisible witnesses around us. Where a similar scene is described by Paul in 1 Cor. iv. 9, he says we are a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men. Does not this imply that angels are acquainted with our procedure on earth ? Is there not the same ground in the clause under consideration, for extending this knowledge to the spirits of just men made perfect ? Doubtless the whole representation of the Christian life as a race is figurative ; but if we may set aside the spectators whom the apostle places upon the scene, and maintain that they know nothing at all about us, why may we not equally set aside the judge, and affirm that he takes no cognisance of our procedure ? yea, why may we not annihilate the race itself, and set the whole down as a dream ? Doubtless in

the interpretation of figurative language there is a danger of understanding it too literally and grossly ; but equally, on the other, there is a danger of robbing it of all significancy whatever. The gross view of the *νέφος μαρτύρων* would be, that departed saints are drawn up in ranks beside us, to mark our steps. The correct and proper view seems to be, that they really do know something of us, and feel an interest in our faithful and persevering service of Christ.

From the description of the spectators, the apostle passes on to mention the preparations needful for successfully running the Christian race : *ἔγκον ἀποθέμενοι πάντα, καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἁμαρτίαν*. The word *ἔγκος* signifies a tumour, a swelling, any augmentation of size beyond the normal bulk. It also signifies weight or encumbrance. The signification of corpulency, although favoured by Bleek and Tholuck, and others, is altogether unsuitable here ; for how could a runner lay aside his superabundant flesh, when the spectators have already appeared upon the ground ? Abstinence and regimen require a length of time to produce their effect upon the body. Doubtless, therefore, weight or encumbrance is the meaning to be assigned to the word here ; and everything must be included which the runner may have about his person, even all superabundant clothing. But the language of the apostle is figurative, and therefore the question arises, What does it mean when applied to believers ? It is a very common idea, that it means sin in general as the main hindrance to a godly career. And there could be no doubt at all in regard to this view, if the phrase *καὶ τὴν εὐπερίστατον ἁμαρτίαν* were not subjoined ; but the conjunction of the two phrases involves the question in considerable difficulty. Is the second explanatory of the first, or does it exhibit something that is completely new, or does it bring prominently forward something already included in *ἔγκος*, and differing from it as species from genus ? Ebrard contends that the two expressions must be exclusive of one another, and that consequently *ἔγκος* must refer to things not sinful in themselves, yet calculated to impede religious progress. But he overlooks the circumstance that the two phrases are not homogeneous. The one applies literally to a runner, and the other applies literally to a Christian. Were they homogeneous,

there would be no room for doubt that they referred to different kinds of hindrance ; but their mixed character, as literal and figurative, renders it probable that the one is an explanation of the other. What *δγκος* is to a racer, that *ἁμαρτία* is to a Christian. Yet we are not obliged to suppose the two exactly commensurate. Expounded of the Christian, *δγκος* must mean everything calculated to retard his progress, mistaken ideas of religion, such as many of the Jews entertained, too great entanglement with the affairs of life, and all sinful affections and practices. All these come under the comprehensive phrase *πάντα δγκον* ; and then *τὴν ἁμαρτίαν* is added, to bring into view what is the principal burden, and what, in fact, gives to everything else its power of being a burden. Were you, for the purpose of maintaining a complete distinction between the phrases, to suppose *δγκος* descriptive only of the cares of life, and such things as were not sinful in themselves, then you would have nothing in the literal runner that afforded a counterpart to sin in the Christian. Were you, on the other hand, to make *δγκος* and *ἁμαρτία* exactly commensurate, then it would be implied that nothing could be obstructive of the Christian's course, unless it were sinful *per se*.

The epithet applied to *ἁμαρτίαν* requires particular notice. *Εὐπερίστατος* occurs nowhere else within the whole compass of Greek literature, and therefore its meaning must be settled simply on etymological grounds, and by means of the context. Various significations have been proposed, grounded upon the meanings of *περίστασις*, *περίστατος*, and *περίτονημι*. *Περίστασις* signifies circumstances, engagements of life, also a reverse, peril. It has therefore been argued by Salmasius, that *εὐπερίστατος* may signify "greatly involved in affairs," and by Kypke, looking at the last signification of the noun, viz. peril, that it may mean exposed to danger. But Tholuck objects to both these meanings, that they rather describe the predicates of a person than of a thing. Another meaning of *περίστασις* is a crowd standing round, whence *περίστατος* is used to signify, surrounded and admired by the crowd : *εὐπερίστατος*, therefore, might naturally enough bear the same signification intensified, viz. "greatly admired, much followed after," and this is the signification adopted by Wetstein and Boehme ; but though it

seems defensible on etymological grounds, and has this great argument in its favour, that it follows the analogy of the actually existing adjective *πεπλῶτατος*, yet it does not well suit the scope of the apostle's discourse. Again, the verb *πεπιπλῶται* signifies to bring round to one's own views, to change to the worse; and therefore Carpzov and Schulz assign to *εἰπεπλῶτατος* the signification of seducing, deceitful, alluring on all sides. The idea exactly suits the scope of the passage, deceitfulness being one of the leading characteristics of sin; but it has been objected to this view, that all the adjectives in *τος*, formed from *πλῶται* or any of its compounds, have an intransitive or passive signification. Again, *πεπιπλῶσθαι*, in the middle, signifies to place one's self round, to surround; and therefore it has been concluded that the adjective *εἰπεπλῶτατος* may mean readily surrounding a person, cleaving to him. This signification has drawn round it the greatest number of supporters. It seems to rest upon a sound etymological basis, and it gives a description of sin which is perfectly just in itself, and which exactly suits the complexion of the passage. Sin is an encumbrance which cleaves to man—it besets him on all sides. "Easily besetting" is a pretty good translation, yet it is apt to suggest the idea of an enemy conducting an assault; but the governing participle *ἀποθέμενοι* requires that sin be considered not in the light of a foe advancing upon us, but rather as something which clings fast to us, so as to impede our movements. It surrounds us as ivy does trees. We must throw it aside, if we would run successfully the Christian race.

It is a very common idea, that the apostle is here speaking not of sin in general, but of the particular sins which individuals feel themselves to be most liable to fall into, so that besetting sin has become quite synonymous with favourite vice. This view is grounded upon the English version, and receives no countenance from the Greek phrase, which points to sin in general, and describes it as cleaving closely to man. If there was any one sin more in the apostle's view than another, it was probably apostasy, into which many circumstances conspired at that time to seduce men; but the language employed is quite general, and cannot mean the favourite sins of different individuals. Each is admonished to lay aside all sin, and doubtless

common sense dictates that the greatest effort should be made to overcome those evil inclinations which we are sensible have the greatest power over us.

All needful preparation having thus been made for the race, we must run with strenuous effort: δι' ὑπομονῆς τρέχωμεν τὸν προκείμενον ἡμῖν ἀγῶνα. Beza understands ἀγῶνα to mean the ground where the contest in question takes place, but in the New Testament the word almost always designates the struggle itself. The word is of a general kind, and means any conflict; but here it must be understood of a race. Προκείμενον ἡμῖν expresses the idea that the race is set before us or assigned to us; and it is our duty to run δι' ὑπομονῆς, with patience. Ὑπομονή, however, involves fully more of the idea of activity than our word patience. It means constancy, endurance. There are many difficulties to be encountered by the Christian. There is a course marked out for him by his Lord, and he must pursue it at all hazards. The very idea of a race involves the necessity of strenuous exertion. We must be prepared for fatigue and toil. The runner, too, was obliged to pursue a definite course. If he overleaped certain barriers, he excluded himself from all hope of the prize. So must we not merely run, but we must run the race set before us. The course is prescribed in Scripture. Barriers are erected all along the line, and we must keep within the limits assigned to us. If we disregard these, it is not the Lord's race we are running, but a race of our own; and in the end we shall have the fearful disappointment of finding that the prize is not for us. Run strenuously, run in the right course.

Ver. 2. Having surrounded the scene of action with spectators, in order to animate the runners, the apostle next brings into view a motive of a far higher kind, viz. the example of the Lord Jesus Christ: ἀφορῶντες εἰς τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν—Looking unto Jesus, etc. Ἀφορῶντες is a most appropriate word. It has nearly the same signification as ἀπέβλεπεν in chap. xi. 26. It indicates a concentration of the mind upon some special object, to the exclusion of other things that may be courting the attention. The Christian must look away from much that is near at hand and very attractive, and fix his eye upon the Saviour, who is waiting to receive him at

the end of his career. So the runner in an earthly race looks neither to the right hand nor to the left, but straight on to the place where the judge is seated.

In this verse there is a description presented of what Jesus is, of what He has done, and of the glorious reward which He has received on high; all designed to stir up believers to the earnest and faithful imitation of His example.

What Christ is, is exhibited in these words: τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτήν. Various views have been taken of this clause. Schlichting, Stuart, and most others, conceive it to describe our Lord as the founder and consummator of the Christian religion. And doubtless there are passages where *πίστις* means, by metonymy, the truth believed, as in Acts vi. 7, "The priests became obedient to the faith," that is, embraced the gospel; and Jude 3, "the faith once delivered to the saints." But it is a conclusive argument against this exposition, that throughout the whole passage upon which our text is grounded, and of the subject handled, in which it furnishes an additional illustration, the word *πίστις* means not an objective scheme of truth, but the subjective feeling of faith in the minds of men.

Others, therefore, as Chrysos., Theophy., J. Capellus, Estius, understand *πίστις* to mean our faith; and they view the clause as declaring that Christ originates faith in our bosoms, or gives occasion by His work for the existence of faith in us, and also by His Spirit strengthens the principle until it reach perfection. He supplies the materials, and kindles the fire; He also fans it into a bright and durable flame. He sows the seed, and ripens it. And in defence of this view, appeal is made to Heb. ii. 10, where ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῶν undoubtedly does mean author, or source of their salvation. But if this had been the idea which the apostle meant to express, ἡμῶν must necessarily have been added to *πίστις*, to indicate the seat of the faith spoken of. Besides, there is another consideration which supplies an argument of equal strength against both the views already stated, viz. that the object of the apostle in this verse is not to exhibit Christ's claim to our gratitude, but to hold Him up as a model for us to copy. All the saints mentioned in the preceding chapter were patterns more or less worthy of imitation; but Christ is the great pattern of every excellence; He is the perfect

model of every grace. The ancient saints were all possessed of faith; and they manifested their trust in God more or less perfectly: they laboured, they suffered, they died on account of their principles. But nothing that has been evinced among men of trust in God, can be compared with the life of Christ, who, amid the terrible scenes of Gethsemane and Calvary, and the darkness which extorted from Him the fearful cry, "My God!" persevered in His work, and executed the will of His Father: "He endured the cross, despising the shame." We may learn much from the ancient saints; but if we want a perfect model of faith, we must look to Christ. Unquestionably, therefore, if the words can be viewed as descriptive of the faith of Christ Himself, they will best fall in with the scope of the passage. An objection, however, to this interpretation readily suggests itself, grounded upon the consideration that Christ is commonly exhibited as the object of faith, and not at all as the subject of it. But we must remember that *πίστις*, in the whole of this passage, has a more general signification than it bears in Romans. It means simply trust in God, or faith in God's promises. Now Christ displayed this trust as really as the ancient saints, and in a far higher degree; and His sufferings and death were fitted to teach the same lessons as the martyrdom of any martyrs who have ever sealed their testimony with their blood. Now, in this view, what are the ideas we must attach to *ἀρχηγός* and *τελειωτής*? The former has been viewed as meaning leader of faith, in the sense of exhibiting an example of it. A perfectly similar use of the word is to be found in Mic. i. 13, where *ἀρχηγός ἀμαρτίας αὕτη ἐστὶ τῇ θυγατρὶ Σιών* means, "She is the ring-leader in sin to the daughter of Sion." Then *τελειωτής*, which occurs in no other Greek writer, must be viewed as expressing the idea that He carried faith to perfection. He took the lead in regard to faith, and He exhibited the most perfect model of it. He was the leader and perfect specimen of both.

In complete accordance with this view is the description of Christ's conduct which follows, showing how His trust in God manifested itself: *ὃς ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς ὑπέμεινε σταυρόν*.

Two modes of explaining the clause *ἀντὶ τῆς προκειμένης αὐτῷ χαρᾶς* have prevailed, springing from the different views

taken of the preposition *ἀντὶ*. The more common acceptation of the word is, "in stead of," "in the room of;" and therefore many conceive the joy spoken of to be what Christ gave up or sacrificed when He prepared to encounter death. And some, as Gregory Naz. and Beza, conceive this joy to be the blessedness which He possessed in heaven before His incarnation, thus making the passage parallel to the statement in Philippians: He was in the form of God, yet humbled Himself, and became obedient to death. But the word *προκειμένης* does not at all comport with this view; for the felicity of Christ prior to His incarnation was not a thing offered to Him, but actually enjoyed. Others, therefore, as Chrysostom, Theophylact, Capellus, Calvin, Luther, still viewing the joy as something sacrificed, consider it to be the happiness which Christ might have enjoyed upon earth, if He had chosen to put away the cross from Him. But although this interpretation is quite consistent with the more common meaning of *ἀντὶ*, and also gives its proper force to *προκειμένης*, yet it introduces an idea quite foreign to the position and character of Christ; for what joy can we conceive a residence in this world fitted to impart to the Son of God, after His work was abandoned? What was temporal happiness to Him, or the possession of all the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them? The word *χαρὰ* carries the mind to something altogether different; and it is frequently used in the New Testament to denote spiritual and heavenly happiness (Matt. xxv. 21; John xvii. 13; 1 Pet. iv. 13). Therefore the bulk of modern interpreters have felt constrained to view this clause as descriptive, not of what Christ sacrificed in submitting to the cross, but of what He anticipated as the reward of His voluntary humiliation and endurance of a painful death. This exposition gives its full force to *χαρὰς*, is quite consistent with the import of *προκειμένης*, and only requires that *ἀντὶ* be understood in a sense not so common as the other meaning already stated. Yet *ἀντὶ* is very similarly used in the 16th verse of this very chapter, where we are told that Esau relinquished his birthright *ἀντὶ βρώσεως μιᾶς*, for the sake of one meal. So the meaning of the clause under consideration may be, that Christ, for the sake of the joy set before Him, as the reward of His sufferings, "endured the cross." And the sentiment thus expressed finds

a parallel in the very passage of Phil. ii. 8, appealed to in defence of the first view ; for if, on the one hand, Christ's relinquishment of heaven to come down to this world be there mentioned, equally on the other it is stated, that after His death, and on account of His death, He was highly exalted, and received a name above every name. The concluding clause of the verse before us, too, confirms the interpretation we have given ; for it tells us, that after Christ's endurance of the cross, He took His seat at the right hand of God. Now what is this but the obtaining of the joy whose anticipation led Him to encounter the cross, and to disregard all the shame connected with it ? He looked forward to a reward of His sufferings, and He was not disappointed. The phrase *ὑπέμεινε σταυρὸν* is skilfully selected. It looks back to *δι' ὑπομονῆς* in the first verse. We are to run with *endurance*, looking to Christ, who *endured* even the cross. And we are not to be deterred by the derision or reproaches of men ; for Christ despised the shame of the cross, which was considered the most opprobrious and disgraceful death. In the room of *ἐκάθισεν*, the best editions now read *κεκάθικεν*, as supported by the weightiest authorities. And this reading, as being a perfect tense, implies, that not only has Christ taken His seat at God's right hand, but that He still sits there. The aorist must be translated "He sat down," but the perfect "He has taken His seat."

Ver. 3. The third verse contains a fuller exhibition of the principle brought into view in the second. Having directed attention to Jesus as the noblest model of all, the apostle calls upon the Hebrews to make His example the subject of very deliberate consideration : *ἀναλογίσασθε γὰρ τὸν τοιαύτην ὑπομεμενηκότα ὑπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν εἰς αὐτὸν ἀντιλογίαν, ἵνα μὴ κάμητε ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν ἐκλύόμενοι*. What is implied in *ἀφορῶντες*, is more narrowly defined by *ἀναλογίσασθε*. In looking to Jesus, we must scrutinize His example on all sides ; we must weigh the circumstances in which it was exhibited ; we must compare His sufferings and temptations with those to which we are exposed ourselves. It is a distinguishing and reasoning consideration which *ἀναλογίσασθε* describes. *Γὰρ* is regarded by Tholuck and Ebrard as a mere expletive, because it is connected with an imperative ; but this is an unsatisfactory

view. It rather assigns the danger of fainting as a reason for the looking to Jesus recommended in the preceding verse. The substantial elements of the thought are these: "Run with eye fixed upon Christ, who has set so noble an example; *for* the attentive consideration of what He has suffered is the best means of rousing the soul, so as to prevent it from being overcome." It is true, the thought is thrown by the apostle's ardour into the shape of an admonition; but this does not alter the logical connection of its parts, though it invests it with a somewhat singular aspect. Some authorities read *οὖν* instead of *γάρ*; but although this conjunction might rather have been expected after an imperative, yet the amount of evidence in its favour is quite trifling. And, in fact, *γάρ* is more impressive. With *οὖν*, the third verse would simply be a cool, calm inference or admonition: "Consider, then, Him," etc.; but with *γάρ* there is the same admonition, coupled with a suggested reason, and enforced with more passion. Run, looking to Jesus the crucified; for that you may keep from fainting, what more potent means can you employ? Consider Him who has endured so much.

Ἀντιλογίαν means more than verbal contradiction. *Τοιαύτην* coupled with it points to the preceding verse, as descriptive of the kind of opposition referred to. It was opposition that issued in a painful and shameful death. And, in fact, *ἀντιλογία* is frequently employed to designate an active resistance, as in Tit. ii. 9, Rom. x. 21. Here, undoubtedly, it refers to all the measures which were taken against Christ by His enemies,—their hard speeches, their opprobrious taunts, their cruel and bloody persecutions. *Ἀμαρτωλῶν* is here used with emphasis. All men are sinners, but the sinners here meant are the wicked men who plotted against the life of the Holy One and the Just. Their opposition, however, could not shake His stedfast purpose. He braved it all. The perfect participle *ὑπομεμενηκότα* does not historically narrate a victory, which might possibly afterwards have been followed by a defeat; but it describes Christ as one who has triumphed, and whose triumph endures unchecked by any reverse. The rendering should be, not who endured, but who has endured, such contradiction. And while the phrase "such opposition" refers back to the preceding verse for the measure of its magnitude, it was probably, at the same

time, designed to suggest to the Hebrews, that the difficulties by which they were tried were far inferior. And accordingly this idea is fully and plainly exhibited in the following verse, after the way has thus been prepared for it.

The concluding clause of the 3d verse describes the purpose which the consideration of Jesus as a suffering Saviour is fitted to serve. *Κάμητε* and *ἐκλυόμενοι* are both terms selected with reference to the figure of a race, and they indicate the failure of strength by reason of the difficulties to be encountered. Looking at these words in themselves, it may not be easy to say which expresses the greater degree of failure or exhaustion; but as they stand here, *κάμητε*, the finite verb, is plainly designed to describe the final issue, and the participle *ἐκλυόμενοι* the process of exhaustion which leads to it: that ye may not faint through becoming feeble. Whether should the words *ταῖς ψυχαῖς ὑμῶν* be connected with *κάμητε* or with *ἐκλυόμενοι*? The latter connection seems the preferable one. *Κάμνω* is generally used absolutely by itself. If *ταῖς ψυχαῖς* be construed with *κάμητε*, "lest ye be weary in your mind," then *ἐκλυόμενοι* makes a very abrupt termination of the sentence; whereas the other connection makes a much more graceful ending, and it also more correctly exhibits the progress of declension. Becoming feeble or relaxed in our minds, is that which leads to a failure in the Christian race.

Ver. 4. In the verses which follow (4-17), we find an exhibition of the benefits of chastisement (4-11), coupled with an admonition embracing sundry particulars (12-17). In the closing verses of the preceding chapter, and in the commencement of this one, sorrows and sufferings are described as a means of testing the reality and strength of faith. Very naturally, therefore, they are next considered under the aspect of a fatherly chastisement, designed to promote the spiritual good of God's children. Wherever sufferings are so borne as to prove the existence of faith, there also they serve the purpose of strengthening both it and every Christian grace. The fourth verse may be viewed as the introduction to the topic of chastisement, and it serves as a transition from the view of suffering as a test, to the view of suffering as a means of correction. It brings fully and prominently into view an idea

which, we have seen, is suggested by the word *τοιαύτην* in the preceding verse. Think of Christ, who endured such sufferings—how immeasurably greater than you have encountered! *Οὐπω μέχρῃς αἵματος ἀντικατέστητε πρὸς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι.*

It has been made a question, whether *πρὸς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν* should be viewed as connected with *ἀντικατέστητε* or with *ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι*. Undoubtedly it must take rank along with the latter word. *Ἀντικατέστητε* already has *μέχρῃς αἵματος* under its wing; and if *πρὸς τὴν ἁμαρτίαν* be similarly associated with it on the other side, then *ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι* is left alone, unsupported and feeble, and would be better off the field altogether. Ye have not yet resisted against sin unto blood, striving! No; the meaning is: Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin. Your conflict with evil has not yet reached extremity. *Πρὸς* is here used in a sense which is not very frequent; but undoubted instances of it are to be found both in the New Testament and in the common Greek writers.

This verse is susceptible of different interpretations, all regulated by the view that is taken of *ἁμαρτίαν*. Some understand this word to designate here the evil principle in the heart, and therefore they feel constrained to give a figurative acceptance to *μέχρῃς αἵματος*: Ye have not yet resisted your sinful nature to the uttermost. According to this view, the fourth verse does not embody the mere statement of a fact, but it also contains a censure. But there are two considerations which seem sufficient to set aside this explanation. The literal meaning of *μέχρῃς αἵματος* is most consistent with the relation of the verse to what goes before, where the effusion of Christ's blood upon the cross is mentioned. And further, if the 4th verse were to be viewed as a censure for the insufficient resistance of sin, it might have been expected that something should be added, by way of specifying where the deficiency lay, and pointing out what sins and shortcomings required their attention.

Others take *ἁμαρτίαν* as the abstract for the concrete, and view it as equivalent to *ἁμαρτωλοῖς*, the reason assigned for this being, that the conflict of Christ is described in the preceding verse as having been with sinners. He was opposed by

sinner to the effusion of His blood ; ye have not resisted, then, to that extent. This is the view taken by Primasius, Piscator, Gerhard, Ernesti, Carpzov, and Heinrichs ; but it has been well observed by Bleek, that if the apostle had meant sinners, he would most probably have used the word *ἀμαρτωλούς*. Without a doubt, the simplest and most natural view of the subject is, that *ἀμαρτίαν* just means sin in general, viewed as the foe of believers. It is here personified. It is an enemy which assails us with weapons of various sorts. Temptations to apostasy through the violence of persecution were the weapons mainly employed against the Hebrew Christians. These they had withstood, enduring many afflictions and trials for the sake of Christ ; but they had not yet been placed in circumstances where they needed to suffer to the extent of laying down their lives, like Christ Himself, and like the saints mentioned at the close of the preceding chapter. To this it has been objected, that James the brother of the Lord had been killed with the sword in Jerusalem ; and therefore it has been argued that this epistle could not have been addressed to the Hebrews in Palestine. But many years had elapsed since that time ; and the meaning of the apostle may be, that none of the existing generation had been exposed to martyrdom.

Why does the apostle remind the Hebrews that they had not yet suffered unto blood ? Probably because they were disposed now to murmur at the smaller trials and persecutions which were befalling them. And accordingly the voice of censure begins to speak in the following verse : *καὶ ἐκλέλησθε τῆς παρακλήσεως, ἥτις ὑμῖν ὡς υἱοῖς διαλέγεται.*

It does not materially affect the meaning of this clause, whether it be viewed as an affirmation or as a question. As an affirmation, the words present a somewhat rugged aspect, and carry with them a greater amount of sternness than the general complexion of the passage would have led us to expect. As a question, they suggest more gently, but with equal impressiveness, the idea that the Hebrews must have been forgetting an important feature of the divine government, when they allowed the comparatively small trials which they were enduring to discompose their minds, and to obstruct their Christian course. Have ye forgotten the language of Scripture in regard to chas-

tisement? It seems as if they had been disposed to consider the afflictions and persecutions to which they were exposed, as inconsistent with what they had reason to expect as the sons of God. If they really were God's children, why should not His fatherly care ward off sorrows and tribulations from them, and bless them with a greater amount of security and comfort? Such thoughts could only originate in a misapprehension of the plan of Providence. Trials did not disprove their possession of God's fatherly love. He viewed them as His sons, even while He was afflicting them. His word expressly addressed the suffering believer as a son, and declared that His chastisements were a proof of love, and designed to promote the spiritual well-being of the soul.

Παράκλησις, like the cognate verb, sometimes designates a consolatory address, and sometimes one of an admonitory kind. In the passage quoted from the book of Proverbs (iii. 11, 12), it is difficult to say whether consolation or admonition predominates. There is the admonition to bear chastisement without fainting; but there is, at the same time, the consolatory assurance that chastisement is an evidence and token of God's love. Some therefore render *παράκλησις* consolation, and others admonition. Perhaps admonition is preferable, because the first and leading idea in the passage quoted is advice, *μὴ ὀλγῶρει*. The *παράκλησις* mentioned is personified and introduced as speaking. *Διαλέγεται* is finely chosen. It expresses the idea, not of an address, but of a conference, of a reasoning with men on the ground of their complaints. It is such an affectionate appeal as a father addresses to his children.

And now follow the words of the *παράκλησις*. "*Τίέ μου, μὴ ὀλγῶρει παιδείας Κυρίου, μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος· ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ Κύριος παιδεύει· μαστιγοὶ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παραδέχεται.*" Here the translation of the Seventy is followed with trifling deviations. *Τίέ μου*, and *υἱόν*, and *παιδείας*, and indeed the whole aspect of the quotation, exhibit the grounds why the apostle used the terms *ὡς υἱοῖς* in the preceding verse. The passage overflows with paternal feelings, and represents the God who spake through Solomon as indeed the loving yet wise Father of all who put their trust in Him: *μὴ ὀλγῶρει παιδείας Κυρίου*—make not light of the chastisement of the Lord.

Παιδεία, in the common Greek, denotes education, but being employed in the Sept. to represent the Heb. מַסְכֵּה, it has acquired the signification of chastisement. This meaning is confined to scriptural Greek; and being the meaning undeniably borne by the word in this clause, consistency requires that it be preserved in the 7th and 8th verses. This does not imply that there is any danger of our making light of suffering, considered simply as such. We are apt to be too much taken up with the thought of it; but while we may be engrossed with our sorrows, there is a danger of our overlooking God's hand in them, and failing sufficiently to recognise them as His chastisement. While we cannot but be sensible of the anguish they occasion, our main effort should be to view them as the infliction of a Father's hand. We are to give as large and constant admission as possible to the idea that they are chastisements. Hence it is added, in beautiful consistency with the first clause, *μηδὲ ἐκλύου ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἐλεγχόμενος*. If we allow our minds to dwell upon our sufferings, considered simply in their painful aspect, and give but small space to the view of them as corrective and disciplinary appliances, we shall be ready to faint when God's hand is laid upon us. The only way of being enabled to bear up under them with courage and constancy, is to recognise the element of chastisement in them, and to make it not a subordinate, but a ready object of contemplation: *ὃν γὰρ ἀγαπᾷ Κύριος, παιδεύει*. The afflictions which are assigned to God's people are not proofs of His neglect or alienation. They spring from His love, and manifest the interest which He takes in their spiritual well-being. The rod of correction is applied to us, that we may be led to amend our faults, and thus become prepared for more exalted happiness. As, in the first two clauses of the quotation, admonition takes the lead, so here consolation comes prominently into view; and the design of it is to make us willing to bear God's chastisements with patience and cheerful submission, that we may obtain the full benefit of them. Is it God's hand that is upon us? Does He smite us under the impulse of fatherly love? What greater encouragement could we have to nerve ourselves to endurance, and cast from us every idea of fainting? *Μαστιγοῖ δὲ πάντα υἱὸν ὃν παράδεχεται*. The sentiment here expressed is the same as that in the preceding

member. If we are really accepted of God, and made His sons, we may expect to be scourged by Him as a loving Father, who takes an interest in our well-being. The quotation consists of four members; the first two of which are admonitory, and the last two consolatory and encouraging. The first of the second pair is specially related to the first of the first, and the second of the second pair to the second of the first. Recognise chastisement; it is God who chastises. Faint not under suffering; it is God who scourges you.

Vers. 7, 8. In the verses which follow, the apostle proceeds to give a representation of his own ideas and feelings, grounded upon the quotation from the book of Proverbs. And it is the words *παιδείας* and *παιδεύει* which are more specially made the groundwork of his remarks: *εἰ παιδεύαν ὑπομένετε ὡς υἱοὶς ὑμῶν προσφέρεται ὁ Θεός· τίς γάρ ἐστιν υἱὸς ὃν οὐ παιδεύει πατήρ; εἰ δὲ χωρὶς ἐστε παιδείας, ἥς μέτοχοι γέγονασιν πάντες· ἄρα νόθοι ἐστὲ καὶ οὐχ υἱοί.* The first clause of the 7th verse furnishes an example of a reading supported by a vast, yea, a preponderating amount of external authority, and yet such as many feel at once constrained to reject as inadmissible. A, D, E, and many other MSS., as also the most ancient versions, read *εἰς παιδεύαν*. This completely alters the construction, and brings out a sense considerably different from the other reading. *ὑπομένετε* requires to be viewed as the imperative, and the meaning must be, "endure for correction." To this idea, Bleek objects that correction is not the end of endurance, but the subject of it, or the thing to be endured. This, however, is not a fair objection. Strictly speaking, it is the suffering that is endured, and it serves the purpose of correction only when it is borne in a proper spirit. Endure for correction, therefore, makes quite good sense; endure every trial as a means of promoting your spiritual improvement. It is only when we look upon our sufferings as proceeding from the hand of God, and submit to them as the chastisements of His fatherly love, that they can be productive of any advantage to us. The meaning of the clause is, that our endurance of suffering is always to proceed upon the view of it as chastisement; and thus it really brings out a very important thought.

On the supposition that *εἰς* is the genuine reading, the

second clause must be viewed as a separate statement, logically but not grammatically connected with the first: *ὡς υἱοῖς ὑμῶν προσφέρεται ὁ Θεός*—God dealeth with. Ebrard, indeed, contends that *ὡς* may be viewed as a conjunction, as in Heb. iii. 11, Luke iii. 23, Rom. i. 9; and no doubt it might, but it is needed as an adverb to qualify *υἱοῖς*, and it cannot serve both purposes. The two clauses, therefore, must be thus rendered: "Endure for correction; God is dealing with you as sons."

But let us look for a little to the received reading, *εἰ*. The effect of its adoption is to give a more symmetrical form to the whole sentence; and the 7th and 8th verses become similar in structure, and are beautifully balanced against one another, just as the 5th and 6th are. Now, this is just precisely what we might expect from the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, who is very nice and careful of his structural periods. And yet it is argued that this might be the reason why some early transcriber deleted the Sigma from *εἰς*, which is certainly the better supported reading. Taking *εἰ* as genuine, we require to give a different shade of meaning to *ὑπομένετε*, from what it bears in all the preceding verses, and from what suits the other reading. It cannot refer to the patient endurance of trials, but it must simply mean, having trials assigned to us. God's dealing with us as sons does not depend upon our constancy and vigour and firmness; on the contrary, it precedes our perseverance, and is designed to stimulate to these qualities. The meaning of the two clauses, therefore, cannot be, "if ye endure chastisement as sons, or hold out under it, God is dealing;" but it must be, "if ye suffer chastisement, *i.e.* have chastisement meted out to you, God dealing with you as sons." And certainly it must be acknowledged, that the modified meaning we thus require to assign to *ὑπομένετε*, furnishes an argument of no small weight in favour of *εἰς*; for both the noun and the verb in all this preceding passage express the idea of determined perseverance.

The concluding clause of the 7th verse seems equally consistent with either view of the first: *τίς γάρ ἐστιν υἱὸς ὃν οὐ παιδεύει πατήρ*; These words are designed to illustrate what is meant by God's dealing with men as sons. The paternal relation necessarily requires the employment of chastisement of

some kind or other, as the means of repressing what is evil in children. The principle here laid down is a general one. Two modes of translating the verse have been proposed: "Who is a son whom the father chastises not?" or, "What son is there whom his father chasteneth not?" There is really no substantial difference between these renderings. In either case the idea expressed is, that sonship involves the idea of being liable to chastisement, which is not to be viewed as a calamity, but as a privilege. The want of chastisement would argue the absence of fatherly care. And this idea is more fully expressed in the 8th verse: *εἰ δὲ χωρὶς ἔστε παιδῆς, ἧς μέτοχοι γεγόνασιν πάντες, ἅρα υἱοὶ ἔστε καὶ οὐχ υἱοί.* Tholuck argues that in this verse and preceding, *παιδῆς* and *παιδεῖν* cannot mean chastisement, but must express the more general idea of upbringing or rearing, because of the universality with which the proposition is affirmed. But this is quite a frivolous idea. For if there be some children who are not chastised by their parents, it is equally true that there are some who are not brought up by their parents. Particular exceptions, such as either of these, never invalidate general truths of this kind. The connection of the verses with one another, and with the quotation from Proverbs, places it beyond all question that it is chastisement, in the strict sense of the word, that is spoken of in them all. An earthly father chastises his children, and God proceeds in the same manner with those who are His children in Christ Jesus.

Yet, although the last clause of the 7th verse is a general proposition applying to all fathers, it seems requisite to view the 8th verse, as well as the first clause of the 7th, as descriptive only of the special case in hand—the relation of believers to God. The fatherly relation implies the infliction of chastisement. God, therefore, in chastising you, is acting the part of a father. But if ye receive no chastisement from His hand, then are ye not His sons. This specific view of the 8th verse, though rejected by Beza, Limborch, and others, is necessitated by the logical connection; and it is also, as Bleek remarks, most consistent with the tense of *γεγόνασιν* in the central clause, which refers to all who have been God's children, and particularly to the long list of worthies enumerated in the preceding chapter. *Νόθοι* literally signifies children not born of the wife, but of

some handmaid, who therefore occupy an inferior position, and share but little of their father's love and superintendence. As applied here to men in their relation to God, it must signify persons who, although the sons of God by creation, yet are not children of the new covenant nor heirs of promise. They are like the descendants of Hagar as compared with the descendants of Sarah, children of the Sinaitic covenant that gendereth to bondage, and not of the heavenly Jerusalem, that is, the mother of all true believers. The idea of the verse before us, therefore, is quite the same as that exhibited in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, iv. 23-26.

Vers. 9-13. The principle of the paternal relation, in its generality, is again brought forward in vers. 9, 10, with the view of showing that if reverence was given to earthly parents, notwithstanding their chastisements, much more was it due to God; because the inflictions of His providence were never capricious, but were always adapted to benefit His children. These are manifestly additional ideas, and consequently *εἰτα* cannot be regarded as introducing a conclusion, according to the views of some; nor can it be considered as asking a question, according to the views of others, although both these usages belong to the word; but it plainly signifies *then, further*, and ushers in new matter. *Εἰτα τοὺς μὲν τῆς σαρκὸς ἡμῶν πατέρας εἶχομεν παιδευτάς, καὶ ἐνετρεπόμεθα· οὐ πολλῶ μάλλον ὑποταγησόμεθα τῷ πατρὶ τῶν πνευμάτων, καὶ ζήσομεν;* The tense of *εἶχομεν* and *ἐνετρεπόμεθα* indicates that the apostle is speaking of himself and his readers, now adults, and is referring to what occurred in their nonage. When children, we had fathers, chastisers of us; and under their hand we looked up with reverence to them. How submissive, then, should we be to the great God of heaven!

What are we to understand by the phrase, "fathers of our flesh?" It seems most naturally to refer to the descent of children from earthly parents. Some, indeed, consider it as not descriptive of origin at all, but simply of parental superintendence; and in support of this view they adduce the chastisements referred to, which are administered mainly through the body. Both the terms, however, fathers and flesh, carry back the mind beyond superintendence to the bodily descent of

children from parents. The view of Wittich and Nemethus, that ancient fathers and lawgivers are meant, is quite inconsistent with the whole scope of the passage.

The contrasted clause, *τῷ πατρὶ τῶν πνευμάτων*, which of course refers to God, is involved in much difficulty, and has given rise to greater difference of opinion. It seems, however, a sound principle, that the two members opposed to one another must be homogeneously interpreted. If the first could be understood as descriptive simply of fatherly superintendence, then the second might also exhibit God as ruling and controlling His rational creatures. But if the first really requires to be referred to the bodily descent of children from their parents, then it seems as if the second must also describe God as the Father of spirits, because He brings them into existence. An obvious objection to this view, however, at once suggests itself. God is as really the maker of our bodies as of our spirits. Our whole complex constitution derives its origin from Him. But the same objection applies with equal force to the other interpretation of the clause, for God is as really the governor of the physical world as of the spiritual. And with regard to the chastisements inflicted both by parents and by God, it holds equally true, that while they both mainly touch the body, they are both designed to influence and control the mind. It is not more easy, therefore, to maintain a distinction between the reference of the two phrases, on the supposition that they describe simple superintendence, than on the supposition that they describe origination. In fact, a sharper distinction stands out to view in the one case than in the other. The bodily descent of children from their parents is a palpable fact, but it is not so clear that the soul or spirit is derived from them also. Formidable difficulties stand in the way of any such supposition. And, in fact, Scripture seems to decide the question otherwise: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it" (Eccles. xii. 7). The ground, therefore, of the contrast exhibited in the apostle's words may be, that the soul comes directly from God, while the body is brought into existence by means of a subordinate agency. Accordingly this passage has often been employed as an argument against the Lutheran doctrine of traducianism, and in favour of the

creationism held by the Reformed Church, and also by the Church of Rome. It may be asked why the two contrasted phrases, if they are to be similarly interpreted, are so differently constructed. Why did not the apostle say, father of our flesh, father of our spirit? The probability is, that the words of the LXX. in Num. xvi. 22, xxvii. 16, were in his view : אֱלֹהֵי הָרוּחַ לְכָל בָּשָׂר. This, however, affords no reason for taking a different view of the apostle's words; for the phrase in Numbers undoubtedly describes God as the origin of the spirits of all flesh. In the Septuagint the rendering is, Θεὸς τῶν πνευμάτων καὶ πάσης σαρκός, the translators having probably read וכל for לכל. It has been conceived they might understand the passage of angels and mankind. And it is quite possible that the apostle might mean to say, that all spirits, and consequently also human spirits, derived their being from God. This supposition does not in the slightest degree interfere with the cogency of his argument.

From the reference to participation of God's holiness in the next verse, it has been inferred by Calovius, De Wette, Tholuck, and others, that πατὴρ τῶν πνευμάτων may be understood to mean, author of spiritual life, *qui regenerat, qui castigat*; Theodoret, ὡς τῶν πνευματικῶν χαρισμάτων πηγὴν. But the words are not at all adequate to express this idea: some qualifying term must have been added. Besides, were this their meaning, then the contrasted phrase would require to be interpreted, "fathers of our fleshly, depraved nature." But although this interpretation would be liable to less objection than the corresponding interpretation of the other phrase, still there is no ground for supposing that *σαρκός* here expresses any other idea than bodily life; and consequently there is less reason still for making *πνευμάτων* mean spiritual holy life. With regard to the argument grounded upon participation of God's holiness, it does not possess the slightest weight. It confounds the conclusion with the premises. The apostle's argument is, that if our fleshly descent from earthly parents furnishes a reason for obeying them, much more should the consideration that our souls are directly from God constrain us to submit to His authority; and an additional reason for such submission is, that it will assimilate us to the holy character of our Father in

heaven. Doubtless the derivation of holy life from God would have been an equally suitable idea to place in contrast with the derivation of natural life from parents ; and the conclusion with regard to submission drawn by the apostle, would have clearly followed from these premises with equal obviousness. But it is a sufficient reason for setting aside this view, that the bare term *πνευμάτων* is too general to be so restricted. Besides, there is no such restriction in the passage in Numbers from which the phrase seems borrowed. And further still, it is difficult on this view to conceive why the plural should be employed to express an abstract idea. If, indeed, the pronoun had been added, "our spirits," the spirits of Christians as distinguished from others, and consequently regenerated spirits, the case would have been different.

The apostle describes earthly parents as *παιδευτάς*, chastisers, and yet teaches that they are the proper objects of reverence. Yea, the very chastisements which they inflict are the means, when wisely and affectionately administered, of knitting the hearts of their children to them. Their effect is to fill the young mind with shame and sorrow for its faults, and to strengthen the resolution of acting differently in time to come. It is not the most indulgent parents who are most revered, or even most loved, by their children. There is indeed a savage mode of punishment, the mere ebullition of angry passion, which awakens no feelings but wrath and hatred ; but the chastisement of a wise and affectionate parent, administered with weeping eye and trembling hand, and accompanied with remonstrances and warnings, all significant of the interest that is felt in the wellbeing of the child, inspires the heart with reverence and affection.

The word used with respect to the submission due to God, is stronger than the corresponding word in the preceding clause, *ὑποταγασόμεθα*. Our dependence upon the Most High is complete, and therefore we owe Him entire and unending submission.

The concluding clause, *καὶ ζήσομεν*, manifestly describes the effect of the submission rendered to God. It therefore designates spiritual and happy life. As indicative of an end to be reached, it might have been expressed by means of *ἵνα* with a subjunctive. Probably the form actually used might be sug-

gested by the corresponding clause in the preceding member—*καὶ ἐνετρεπόμεθα*.

Ver. 10. This verse brings into view reasons for the much greater submission which, the apostle argued, should be rendered to God under His chastisements, than can at all be claimed for earthly parents. Divine and human chastisements are contrasted with one another; and the main difference is represented as lying in the views which prompt them. As in the preceding verse, so here also, it is the parents of the apostle and of his readers who are particularly instanced, and therefore the imperfect is still used. When we were children, we had fathers who chastised us *κατὰ τὸ δοκοῦν αὐτοῖς*, according to what seemed good to them. The idea here expressed is not that they proceeded arbitrarily and capriciously. They might act according to the best of their judgment, and yet sometimes they would be influenced by wrong motives, and employ measures neither wisely adapted to the case, nor calculated to produce beneficial effects. But the chastisements of God are always administered with perfect wisdom. A present tense of the leading verb must be supplied after *ὁ δέ*. He chastises *ἐπὶ τὸ συμφέρον*, for our advantage or profit. *Ἐπὶ* here describes the object upon which the intention is fixed. No caprice or passion ever influences the divine mind; but He always applies the rod to His children in wisdom and love, and aims at promoting their highest good. The kind of advantage to which *συμφέρον* here refers, is more fully explained in the clause which follows: *εἰς τὸ μεταλαβεῖν τῆς ἀγιότητος αὐτοῦ*—to the end we may partake of His holiness. Earthly parents, even when desiring the good of their children, are apt to look too much to the external and physical ingredients of wellbeing; but the end of all God's disciplinary measures is to affect the moral character. Participation of the divine holiness just means the acquisition of a character like to God's. The idea is the same as that expressed by Peter, when he speaks of believers being made partakers of the divine nature; and the same as that implied in the admonition, "Be ye holy, as I am holy; be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect."

The union of these two clauses, as explanatory of one another, shows that under the government of a holy being

there can be no real and lasting happiness which is not grounded upon moral character. Happiness without holiness is an impossibility. There is no peace to the wicked. God's intention is to make us good like Himself, as the only and the infallible method of raising us to blessedness. And unless we fully realize the inseparable connection between moral character and durable wellbeing, we shall not submit in a right spirit to the chastisements of our Father in heaven. As a proper estimate of the value of bodily health reconciles us to the use of the most bitter medicines; so, if we rightly prize spiritual health, we shall receive without a murmur the most bitter cup which God in His providence may put into our hands.

There seems to be another difference between human and divine chastisements, exhibited in the phrase *πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας*. The import and bearing of these words, however, have been very differently estimated. One view makes them define the period *during* which parental castigation continues, viz. the few days of childhood. This view is consistent enough with the usage of *πρὸς*, which, coupled with an accusative of time, often signifies *for* or *during*. But the great objection to it is, that one cannot readily see how such a statement at all conduces to the object of the apostle, which is to demonstrate the inferiority of the chastisements of earthly parents, and to show that we have less reason for submitting to them than to those of God. They last but a very brief space of time. Surely such an idea runs quite counter to the apostle's object. One of the most powerful considerations to recommend submission to any trial, is that it will not last long. In fact, this very argument is applied to the chastisements of God Himself in chap. x. 37, "Yet a little time, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry;" and 1 Pet. i. 6 appeals to the same consideration: "Though now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness." Now, with what consistency could the short duration of God's chastisements be exhibited as an advantage, and, on the other hand, the short duration of parental chastisements as a disadvantage? Mere shortness of duration, looked at simply in itself, is equally in both cases an argument for willing submission. Besides, according to the view now before us, the second member of the comparison would exhibit nothing

which either directly or by implication could be conceived as corresponding to this phrase in the first. And accordingly, some of those who take this view, as Wetstein, Kuinoel, Boehme, Bleek, argue that the same phrase must be repeated in the second member, and understood there to refer to the few days of human life, as in the first to the few days of childhood. But even conceding the propriety of supplying the phrase with a change in its reference, matters would obviously be made worse; for, so far as simple shortness of duration is concerned, the argument for submitting patiently to the chastisements of parents would be stronger than the argument for submitting to the chastisements of God.

It seems preferable, therefore, with Calvin, Estius, Schlichting, Bengel, Paulus, Tholuck, and others, to understand the phrase under consideration as referring to the space of time for which parents aim by their chastisements at securing the wellbeing of their children: *πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας*—for a few days, viz. the days of human life. The primary use of *πρὸς* with the accusative is to indicate direction towards; and with a word of time it frequently points to a space coming, as in 1 Cor. vii. 5, *ἐκ συμφώνου πρὸς καιρὸν*, by agreement in reference to a time. Against this view the same argument has been urged as against the former, that the second member exhibits no contrast to it. The question, therefore, comes to be, not whether in either case there be an expressed contrast, but in which of the two cases you can most readily conceive a contrast to be fairly implied. And here the advantage all lies with the second view. The only escape from the difficulty in the former case is found by repeating the same phrase, but in a sense which turns the scale the wrong way. In the latter case, however, you find refuge in the supposition suggested by Tholuck, that participation in the divine holiness may fairly be regarded as involving the idea of continuous life, agreeably to the words of Paul in Rom. vi. 22, “Ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” Another objection is urged by Bleek, that the simple words, “a few days,” would not be employed without some qualifying term to describe human life, unless mention were positively made of eternity in the contrasted member. There is some force in this; and we can only get over this difficulty

by supposing that the apostle conceived participation of God's holiness to involve continuous life with sufficient clearness. The objection urged by many, that it is not true that parents look only to the temporal wellbeing of their children, is of no weight; for although parents should consult for the eternal interests of their children, and although pious parents really do this, yet the apostle is not speaking of Christian parents as such. The vast mass of parents have respect, in all the chastisements they employ, to the training of their children for the duties of life; and in a general statement this might be affirmed, without specifying exceptional cases.

According to the view now given, every clause of ver. 10 powerfully supports the conclusion stated in ver. 9. Earthly parents chastise not always wisely; but God does so, with a single eye to our highest wellbeing. Earthly parents have in view the welfare of their children for the fleeting days of human life; but God consults for our eternal blessedness in heaven, by making us like Himself. Much more, therefore, are we bound by every consideration to bear patiently whatever He is pleased to lay upon us.

The 11th verse concludes the subject of chastisement, with an acknowledgment of its painful character, and an exhibition of the mode of its beneficial operation: *πάσα δὲ παιδεία πρὸς μὲν τὸ παρὸν οὐ δοκεῖ χαρᾶς εἶναι, ἀλλὰ λύπης· ὕστερον δὲ καρπὸν εἰρηνικὸν τοῖς δι' αὐτῆς γεγυμνασμένοις ἀποδίδωσι δικαιοσύνης*. Some understand these words to refer exclusively to the chastisements of God; but as the apostle has been speaking of parental as well as divine correction, and as the words before us are quite general, there is no ground for doubting that they should be viewed as a universal proposition. So Chrysostom, *καὶ ἡ ἀνθρωπίνη καὶ ἡ πνευματική*. Divine chastisement, however, being the leading subject, the expressions employed, particularly in the second member of the verse, are manifestly chosen with a special reference to it. No chastisement *πρὸς τὸ παρὸν*, for the present—that is, at the time of its infliction—appears to be matter of joy, but of grief. It is felt to be painful. The genitive of a word after *εἶναι* claims for it possession of what is spoken of—does not belong to joy, but to grief: see chap. x. 39. Yet the use of *δοκεῖ* suggests the

idea, that if we really took an unprejudiced view of the subject, we should at the very time perceive that chastisement was not altogether devoid of the elements of joy. Accordingly, James, i. 2, scruples not to say, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." It is difficult, however, to take this view of chastisement at the time. Our minds are so occupied with the painful features of it, that we are apt to abandon ourselves to sorrow; and it is only afterwards, when the beneficial effects of our sufferings are developed, that we feel and acknowledge that we have been kindly dealt with—*ὅσπερον δέ*. What is meant by *καρπὸν δικαιοσύνης*? Not a few understand the phrase as meaning the fruit that proceeds from righteousness; but against this view it is a conclusive argument that is advanced by Boëhme, that chastisement is what is represented as producing the fruit. How awkward a statement would it be, that chastisement yields the fruit produced by righteousness! Undoubtedly, therefore, righteousness is itself the fruit spoken of, agreeably to the rule so well illustrated by Winer, that one noun in apposition with another is sometimes put in the genitive. What is the fruit yielded by chastisement? It is the fruit of righteousness. Chastisement humbles us, makes us feel how helpless we are, leads us to God that we may be sustained by Him; and in this way is the means of improving our dispositions, fostering within us a spirit of watchful circumspection, and urging us to the practice of all holy deeds. The righteousness here spoken of is the subjective righteousness of the believer himself, the moral and spiritual excellences which grace enables him to cultivate,—holy dispositions in the heart, and upright actions in the life. From the use of the word *δικαιοσύνη*, an argument has been derived against the Pauline authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews; but the argument is worthless: for although in Romans and Galatians *δικαιοσύνη* most frequently means justification, or rather the righteousness of Christ imputed to the believer, yet even in those epistles, and in Paul's other writings, the word often bears the same signification as here; see Rom. vi. 16, 18, 2 Cor. ix. 9, 10. There is one righteousness which we obtain from Christ by faith—that is ours simply by imputation: it is the one and only ground of our acceptance with God, and it lies at the very

foundation of the Christian character. But there is another righteousness of a personal kind, which, although useless for our justification, is nevertheless indispensable as the moral character requisite for our service and enjoyment of God. This righteousness follows justification. It is the product of the Spirit's influence, and it is developed through the instrumentality of the means of grace, and in a very great degree through the instrumentality of chastisement. It is holiness in the heart and integrity in the life. Antinomianism scorns it as self-righteousness; but it should rather scorn itself, as the foe of that holiness without which none shall see the Lord.

The fruit produced by chastisement, viz. righteousness, is described as *εἰρηνικόν*, peaceful, which seems to refer to the inward peace and satisfaction resulting from the cultivation of holy dispositions. In this view, the expression forms a fine contrast with the grief and sorrow occasioned by chastisement at the first. Tholuck conceives that the reference rather is to the conflict implied in *γεγυμνασμένοις*. The fruit of battle is enjoyed in peace. And perhaps there is no reason why the peace attendant upon righteousness may not be viewed as placed in contrast, both with the first sorrow of chastisement, and with the subsequent struggle through which chastisement accomplishes its destined work. But if only one of these is to be selected as the contrast that was in the apostle's view, the structure of the sentence, *πρὸς μὲν τὸ παρόν, ὕστερον δέ*, seems decidedly to favour the idea that *εἰρηνικόν* is suggested by a retrospective rather than a prospective view. Not a few, among whom are Ernesti, Lehler, Bretschneider, understand this word as meaning wholesome, salutary, on the ground that *εἰρήνη*, to which it sometimes corresponds, has this signification; but there is no evidence that *εἰρηνικόν* itself ever acquired this meaning. It means peaceful, peaceable.

A clause is added, to define the circumstances in which chastisement will produce the fruit described. It does not operate necessarily. It is beneficial only. *Τοῖς δι' αὐτῆς γεγυμνασμένοις*. This is a word borrowed from conflicts of the arena and of war. It suggests the idea of combating with difficulties, and bearing trials with unflinching fortitude and courage. When troubles, befalling us in the course of God's providence,

are borne with trust and submission, then they benefit us, and they exert a most salutary influence upon our spiritual state. We may be said to be exercised by affliction, when we view it as proceeding from the hand of God, and as designed for our spiritual good; and when, though using such means of alleviation as prudence and experience suggest, we cherish a spirit of submission to the will of Heaven, and are stimulated to prize the divine favour above all other good.

Vers. 12, 13. The 12th and 13th verses are by some joined to the preceding paragraph, and by others are made the commencement of a new section. That they are suggested by what goes before, is obvious from vers. 2 and 3, and they would form quite a suitable and appropriate close; but then the new division that follows would have an exceedingly abrupt beginning in ver. 14. It seems better, therefore, with Bleek, to view vers. 12 and 13 as forming a transition to new admonitions, and as standing at the head of them.

The terms here employed, τὰς παρεμμένας χεῖρας καὶ τὰ παραλελυμένα γόνατα ἀνορθώσατε, closely resemble Isa. xxxv. 3 and Sirach xxv. 23; but the differences are such as to show that the apostle is not quoting formally from either passage, though they might both be in his mind. Hands relaxed and hanging down, knees loosened and feeble, are striking descriptions of bodily weakness, and fittest emblems of spiritual irresolution and inactivity. It is strenuous effort the apostle is recommending to his readers. They were discouraged by the difficulties and trials to which they were exposed, and ready to faint; but they must bestir themselves. Hands are the instruments of action, knees of motion; and they must brace themselves up for effort of every kind in the service of Christ. The metaphors are suggested by the view given in the first verse of the Christian life as a race. Ἀνορθώσατε signifies to place anything in its proper state, to restore, to rectify; and it is well chosen with respect to the figurative aspect of the passage. Ἰσχύσατε is the term employed in the Septuagint, and ἀνορθώσατε expresses substantially the same meaning, though the one rather describes the result sought, viz. strength, and the other the process of restoring the parts to their normal state. In Isaiah the admonition seems to refer to the efforts which one

believer is to make for the encouragement of another whom he sees halting; but in the passage before us, though this idea is not to be altogether excluded, yet it is the correction of the individual's own faults that is the main subject. Each was to put forth every possible effort, and strive so that he himself might run the Christian race with renewed alacrity and ardour; and no doubt, also, each was also to aid his neighbour by advice, encouragement, and prayer.

Ver. 13. Having mentioned hands and knees, the apostle is naturally led next to speak of feet, which are the symbol of progress: *καὶ τροχιάς ὁρθὰς ποιήσατε τοῖς ποσὶν ὑμῶν*. These words appear to be grounded upon Prov. iv. 26, פֶּלֶם מַעַל רִנָּה, rendered in our version, "ponder the path of thy feet." פֶּלֶם, however, is viewed by many as meaning to make straight or level. So the Septuagint, ὁρθὰς τροχιάς ποιεῖ σοῖς ποσίν; so Gesenius, Nork. Τροχιά, like ἄγος, signifies the rut made by a wheel, and then a path or course in general. Two views are taken of the connection of τοῖς ποσὶν ὑμῶν with the rest of the sentence. Jaeger, Rosen. (*Prov.*), De Wette, Bleek, Tholuck, and others, suppose the meaning to be, "with your feet." Let them describe a straight course in going. Walk so that the footprints you leave behind may be all in a direct line. But this idea does not seem at all suitable to the passage in Proverbs. Besides, the feet in ordinary circumstances leave no track after them, unless you be walking among snow or on some soft road; so that, in this view, the force of τροχιά, and also of מַעַל, is quite lost. The common view which makes ποσίν the *dativus commodi* seems decidedly preferable: "make straight paths for your feet," "choose right courses in which to go." But according to either view of the particular construction of ποσίν, the general meaning of the entire clause remains unaffected. The thing enjoined manifestly is, that our plans of action should all be conformed to the standard of Christian truth and rectitude. Whatever be the special temptations to which we are exposed, we ought to resist them. Very probably, as is supposed by most interpreters, the apostle might have in his view those difficulties and dangers by which the Hebrews were tempted either to return to Judaism altogether, or at least to mix some of its principles with Christianity. A lead-

ing source of trial in apostolic times was exposure to Jewish persecutions.

Vers. 13-17. The concluding clause of the 13th verse is attended with some difficulty. It points out an end to be served by compliance with the apostle's admonition: *ἵνα μὴ τὸ χωλὸν ἐκτραπῇ, ἰαθῇ δὲ μᾶλλον*. It may be made a question here, whether *χωλὸν* denotes what is lame in the individual, or what is lame in the church, as some particular backsliding member of it. The latter view seems entitled to the preference. It is persons the apostle is everywhere speaking of. Besides, the former view would exclude the idea, undoubtedly contained in the text, of the influence exerted by one person over another. It has also been questioned whether *χωλὸν* refer to the same persons who are exhorted, or to others only who are considered as to be influenced by their example. The true view seems to be, that neither, on the one hand, are they to be sharply distinguished from one another; nor, on the other, should it be supposed that the influence of each terminates only upon himself. It is a community that is addressed. Faults are charged upon the whole; but, doubtless, some were more culpable than others. All are admonished; and the consideration here advanced is, that a general revival would be attended with the effect of healing whatever was lame. Those who were most active would not only benefit themselves, but stir up others.

Two views have been taken of the meaning of *ἐκτραπῇ*. The most common one, "be turned out of the way," deviate, has usage in its favour; but it is objected to it that it makes no proper contrast with *ἰαθῇ*. The other rendering, "may not be dislocated," is of course free from this objection, the contrast being perfect; but it is urged against it, that although, etymologically considered, *ἐκτραπῇ* might have been used to mean dislocation, turned out of socket, yet not one example of such usage has yet been found. This fact ought to be decisive. If the common meaning would yield no proper sense at all, then necessity might warrant the adoption of an unprecedented one. But the ordinary signification yields a good sense; and though it does not form a contrast with *ἰαθῇ*, it does so with the straight paths of the preceding clause. Besides, the idea of dislocation would more naturally accord with the supposition that *χωλὸν* meant some-

thing lame in the individual Christian, though it might also with some straining be applied to a defective Christian in danger of being severed from the church. The evil, then, to be prevented, against which the lame are to be guarded, is wandering from the straight course. They might be tempted to turn aside for ease, if impediments and difficulties lay in the way. The good to be sought is their cure. Let their lameness be healed, and then they will prosecute the Christian course along with other believers. And how are they to be healed? This effect is described as a consequence that will follow from the general revival of the church. The straightening of the way, and the removal of obstacles and impediments from it, will facilitate advancement, and exercise will strengthen the parts. The good example set by those who pursue a straight course, will stir up others to thoughtfulness, lead them to seek strength from on high, and thus prepare for their journey.

Ver. 14. The beneficial influence which it is supposed, in the 13th verse, the upright conduct of Christians is fitted to exert upon those who are disposed to go astray, naturally leads to the admonition of the 14th verse, to cultivate peace as the means of increasing such influence: *εἰρήνην δώκετε μετὰ πάντων*. Strife and contention would mar the influence which they might have upon one another; but let peace and concord prevail, and their mutual admonitions and encouragements would be attended with the best effects. *Πάντων* is conceived by some to refer to the Jewish nation as a whole, on the ground that the evil, against which the preceding verse warns, is a tendency to Judaism. Resist this tendency, but do not hate the Jews themselves (Grotius). Live at peace with them, that you may disarm their hostility, and thus diminish your own temptations (Boehme). But to warrant such a reference, the terms would require to have been far more specific. Others conceive that *πάντων* refers to all men, and that similar reasons to those now mentioned lie at the basis of it. But although it is the duty of Christians to be peacefully disposed, yet the connection both with the preceding and following context seems to restrict *πάντων* to the Christian brotherhood. These are the persons spoken of; and mutual watchfulness is enjoined upon them, that, while living at peace, they may take care that no blemish

or root of bitterness spring up among them. The persons indicated by πάντων are manifestly the same as those among whom care is to be taken to preserve the grace of God. A strong word is employed in inculcating the cultivation of peace: διώκετε, pursue, earnestly follow. This sense, though corresponding to the meaning of *קָנָה*, is not a Hebraism, for the same usage occurs in the best Greek writers. Coupled with εἰρήνην, the apostle mentions ἀγιασμόν. The connection of thought is obvious. The pursuit of peace might, by leading to unwarrantable compliances with the evil dispositions and practices of others, endanger purity. This would be ruinous. We must not so prize peace as to sacrifice righteousness: we must cultivate both. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Œcumenius, and others, understand ἀγιασμόν here as referring particularly to chastity; but though the word is applied to this virtue in 1 Thess. iv. 3, yet there is nothing here to indicate any such restriction. It is holiness in general that is meant, holiness of heart and life, just what is indicated in ver. 10 by becoming partakers of the holiness of God. This assimilation to the divine character is the fruit of union to Christ, and of the regenerating and sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost; but it requires to be prosecuted with effort on our part. We must shun evil thoughts and actions, and give all diligence to make our calling and election sure.

Ὁὐ χωρὶς οὐδεὶς ὀφείτῃ τὸν Κύριον. Holiness is indispensable, not as the meritorious ground of admission to the divine presence, but as a necessary qualification. It admits of question whether, with the Vulgate, Calvin, Kuinöl, Tholuck, and others, we should refer τὸν Κύριον to God; or, with the Peschito, Schlichting, Ernesti, Boehme, Bleek, to Christ. Ὁ Κύριος is found applied to both, as in Heb. viii. 2 and ii. 3; and so also is the verb ὀφείμαι, as in Matt. v. 8, Heb. ix. 28. If the former view be followed, then the clause would be parallel to Matt. v. 8, "Blessed are the pure in heart;" and it would point to that enjoyment of the Divine Being which is to constitute the blessedness of those who are made like Him. If the latter view be preferred, then the words would be parallel to Heb. ix. 28, and would describe the actual vision of Christ by His people when He comes in His kingdom. Perhaps the circumstance that the apostle has so shortly before been speaking of Christ's being

seen by those who are waiting for His appearance, should turn the scale in favour of this reference. Christians were looking for the appearance of their Lord: let them remember that holiness was an indispensable qualification for being admitted to His presence.

Ver. 15. This verse is participially connected with the preceding; and consequently it is addressed to the same persons, that is, to the whole body of the church, and not to the rulers simply, as Boehme supposes. The substance of it shows that, as in the pursuit of peace, so also in that of holiness, they were to have respect to others as well as themselves. Follow holiness, *ἐπισκοποῦντες, μή τις ὑστερῶν ἀπὸ τῆς χάριτος τοῦ Θεοῦ*, taking care lest any one fail. *Ἐπισκοποῦντες* expresses the idea of watchful care. It is used in 1 Pet. v. 2 to describe the duties of the office-bearers with respect to the members of the church. Here it indicates the care which all the members should take of themselves, and also in a spirit of brotherly love of one another. While circumspect in their own conduct, and watchful over their own thoughts, they were also to strive, by mutual instruction, and encouragement, and warning, to check the growth of evil in the general body (chap. x. 24).

Ἐπισκοποῦντες has three members dependent upon it. *Μή τις ὑστερῶν*—lest any one fail. *Ἵστερέω* is usually followed, even in the New Testament, by a simple genitive, according to the common Greek usage. Here *ἀπὸ* is inserted, as sometimes in the Septuagint (Eccles. vi. 2); and it is supposed by Boehme and Bleek, that the construction here might be occasioned by the phrase *ἐξέκλινεν ἀπὸ Κυρίου* in Deut. xxix. 18, which the following clause shows was certainly under the apostle's eye at this time. "Failing of the grace of God" means coming short of it. The individual here supposed has a profession of religion, but he does not exercise faith in Christ, so as to be justified and accepted; nor does he employ the means of spiritual improvement, so as to make progress in holiness. He continues a mere nominal Christian, really dead, though having a name to live. It is not apostasy specifically of which the apostle is here speaking. *Ἵστερέω* does not signify, to throw away what has once been possessed, but to be too late, to fail of reaching an object of pursuit. Doubtless, however, the state of mind here de-

scribed is what usually leads to apostasy. It is mere nominal Christians who are ever the parties most ready to take alarm, and to flee at the first appearance of danger. If we would ensure our stedfastness, we must exercise genuine faith, and diligently employ all the means of spiritual culture, that we may become holy. We must seek really to possess the grace of God, both for acceptance and for sanctification.

Μή τις ῥίζα πικρίας ἀνω φύουσα ἐνοχλῇ—lest any root of bitterness, springing up, cause troubles. In Deut. xxix. 17, very similar words are used to describe a person who turns away from the Lord to follow idols of wood and stone, of silver and gold. Here, therefore, the expression must at least mean, one disposed to forsake the God of the gospel—one who belongs to the church, but has not really attained to the grace of God, and is therefore ready to take the lead in mischief. The words of the apostle suggest the idea, that the evils against which he is warning the Hebrews take their rise imperceptibly, like a root under ground, and proceeding from small beginnings, mount up to gigantic proportions of evil. The root of bitterness germinates in secret; it then springs up into view, and spreads its baneful influence far and wide. It troubles the church, by grieving the hearts of the pious, by originating contentions and disputes, and by shaking the unstable. It is not false doctrine that is the root here spoken of, nor immoral practice, but a person, it may be, holding false doctrine, or setting an example of sin. Tholuck conceives that the present participle *φύουσα*, with the present subjunctive *ἐνοχλῇ*, indicate that symptoms of the evil described were already beginning to appear.

As the former clause has no finite verb, it is suggested by De Wette and Bleek, that instead of supplying the subjunctive *ῃ*, it may be better to connect both clauses with *ἐνοχλῇ*—lest any one failing, lest any root springing up, trouble you. And if there were only two clauses, this might be the best way of arranging them; but there are three, and they are all differently constructed, and the verb of existence must be supplied after *βέβηλος*. Perhaps, therefore, it is better to view all the three as independent of one another, and as similarly dependent upon *ἐπισκοποῦντες*. They are all introduced with the thrice repeated phrase *μή τις*.

The idea expressed by ἐνοχλή is more fully brought out in an epexegetic clause, καὶ διὰ ταύτης μανθῶσι πολλοί. The danger of the disturbances excited by wicked men in the church is, that their evil example is likely to spread contamination all around. Weeds sow themselves; they grow readily. So there are in the soil of humanity many circumstances favourable to the growth of evil. In the present condition of the Hebrews, it was to be feared, that if one or two individuals pursued a divisive course, they might draw many along with them. It was of consequence, therefore, to check the evil at once. In all ages, persons deviating from the path of truth and duty, have readily found followers.

With regard to ἐνοχλή, a conjectural emendation has been proposed by Estius, which has met with favour from many. The reading in the Septuagint is ἐν χολῇ—in poison, or venom; and this, it is said, was probably the reading here at first. The arguments in its favour are, the original reading in the Septuagint; the fact that it makes as good sense, and the same sense here as in the Septuagint; and thirdly, the consideration, that if the clause be thus deprived of its verb, it is only put on a level with the other two clauses,—all the three now requiring the supplement of the verb of existence, and all the three being similarly dependent upon ἐπισκοποῦντες. These are certainly a singular concurrence of arguments, all favourable to a reading, yet wholly destitute of manuscript authority. The principle, however, must be held fast, that conjecture is not to be allowed to displace readings accredited by overwhelming positive evidence.

The 16th verse brings into view a third member dependent upon ἐπισκοποῦντες: μή τις πόρνος ἢ βέβηλος ὡς Ἡσαΐ, κ.τ.λ. It has been made a question, whether πόρνος is here used in its proper acceptation, or designates a person who forsakes the service of Christ. The latter view is taken by Storr, Böhme, Kuinoel, Klee, Tholuck, Ebrard, and is defended on the ground that the context is speaking of a tendency to apostasy. But the literal meaning of πόρνος is quite suitable here. The leading admonition of the whole sentence is, to cultivate holiness, without which none shall see the Lord; and the three members participially connected with this admonition exhibit

cautions against certain things inconsistent with it. And among these, with the utmost propriety, whoredom finds a place, as altogether opposed to the sanctity of the gospel system. To give a figurative meaning to *πόρνος*, very nearly identifies this clause with the foregoing one, and thus restricts the range of evils which the apostle exhibits as endangering the attainment of holiness.

With *πόρνος*, in its literal sense, is very naturally connected *βέβηλος*. This word means common, profane, and here designates a person who cares only for the things of sense and time. An example is adduced by the apostle: *ὡς Ἡσαῦ*. Does this example refer both to *πόρνος* and *βέβηλος*, or to *βέβηλος* only? Very many extend the reference to both terms, and they understand Esau to be described as a fornicator, because he married several wives. But though doubtless polygamy was always inconsistent with the divine law, yet there is no proof that it was considered, in the patriarchal ages, equivalent to *πορνεία*. Besides, in this view, the apostle might as well have cited the names of Abraham and Jacob. Reference has indeed been made to rabbinical traditions, which speak of Esau as having committed adultery; but no mention is made of this in Scripture, and therefore it is improbable that this was in the view of the apostle. Without a doubt, the name of Esau is mentioned simply as an illustration of *βέβηλος*. And this view is confirmed by the description which follows, which has no bearing upon *πόρνος*, but looks only to *βέβηλος*: *ὃς ἀντὶ βρώσεως μιᾶς ἀπέδωκε τὰ πρωτοτόκια αὐτοῦ*—who for one meal sold his birthright. *Ἀντὶ* here indicates price, and is used in the same manner as in ver. 2. *Τὰ πρωτοτόκια* is a Hellenistic term, equivalent to the classic words *ἡ πρεσβεία* and *τὸ πρεσβεῖον*. The act here described was that of a profane and worldly person, who cared little for spiritual and heavenly privileges. The birthright, in the case before us, implied not merely a title to temporal possessions, but to the blessings of the promise given to Abraham, which was the distinguishing glory of the theocracy. If Esau had had any proper appreciation of the spiritual advantages and privileges of the covenant made with Abraham and his chosen seed, he would have died of hunger rather than sacrifice them. The readiness with which he relinquished them, and the slighting

manner in which he spoke of them, shows that he was a man of earthly and sensual dispositions.

Ver. 17. Having thus warned the Hebrews against certain things which would interfere with their cultivation of holiness, and having adduced Esau's disregard of his birthright as an illustration of one of these, the apostle brings his subsequent conduct into view, in order to show that wrong steps may often be attended with irrevocable consequences. He presupposes their knowledge of the Old Testament history: *ἵστε γάρ*—for ye know; *ὅτι καὶ μετέπειτα*—that even afterwards; *καὶ* intimates a connection between the original disregard of the birthright and the subsequent rejection; *θέλων κληρονομήσαι τὴν εὐλογίαν*—wishing to inherit the blessing. When the exigency was past which had led him to sell his birthright, he regretted that he had parted with it, and he became desirous of recovering it; but it was now beyond his reach—*ἀπεδοκιμάσθη*. He was rejected. So precious a blessing should have been held fast, at the hazard of his life. The contemptuous manner, however, in which he spoke of it—"What good will this birthright do me?"—shows that he had no proper appreciation of its value, and warrants the belief that even now, when he desired its recovery, it was not for its intrinsic spiritual dignity, but for its worldly advantages and honours. But even if he had come now to take a right view of it, this would not have secured its restoration to him; for only one of the brothers could have it, and Jacob had actually obtained possession of it. By whom was Esau rejected? Some say by his father; and this is so far true. Isaac felt that he could not revoke the words which had gone forth from his lips. The reason of this, however, was that he had spoken as a prophet of the Lord, and declared to Jacob the divine will. To him, therefore, no option was left. Isaac's refusal to restore the blessing to Esau was grounded upon God's will, and was merely the expression of it. In reality, therefore, Esau was rejected by God. Yet this rejection was not reprobation. There is, indeed, every reason to believe that Esau continued in sin, and died impenitent; but still what is here meant, is simply his continued exclusion from the privilege of being the lineal representative of Abraham and Isaac, and the appointed head of the chosen race.

What follows is attended with very great difficulty : *μετανοίας γὰρ τόπον οὐχ εὑρεν*. Here we have the reason for what is affirmed in *ἀπεδοκιμάσθη*. Yet the force of these words has been very differently estimated. Many understand the repentance spoken of to be that of Esau himself. He found no place or opportunity for his own repentance. But there are weighty reasons for rejecting this interpretation. (1.) Were this the right view of the words, then it would be implied, that if Esau had truly repented, what is expressed by *ἀπεδοκιμάσθη* would have been reversed ; but there is no ground whatever for believing this. His repentance would have secured his own individual salvation, but it would not have displaced Jacob from the right so solemnly confirmed to him. Esau had parted with his birthright for a paltry price, and no repentance of his, however sincere, could set aside this transaction. *Γάρ*, therefore, would state as a reason what was no reason at all. (2.) The Hebrews are represented by the apostle as knowing the facts of the case, and therefore the statements here made must all be such as are borne out by the narrative in Genesis. But there is nothing affirmed in regard to any obstacle in the way of Esau's personal repentance. The changes represented as unattainable all lie beyond the sphere of Esau's mind. It is Isaac that cannot change, and God that will not change, what has been solemnly declared. (3.) The reference of *μετανοίας* to Esau himself places the whole clause in flat contradiction to the one that follows: *καίπερ μετὰ δακρύων ἐκζητήσας αὐτήν*. That *αὐτήν* refers to *μετανοίας*, admits of no reasonable doubt. But if Esau had really sought his own repentance with tears, what else but repentance would this have been ? True, we are reminded that chap. vi. speaks of persons who cannot be renewed to repentance ; but they are men so hardened, that all efforts to touch their consciences fail. Could they once be brought to shed tears over their sins as such, they would be shown not to be the kind of persons whose deplorable condition is described in that chapter. The idea of being excluded from repentance, although one seeks it with tears, is quite alien to the gospel. This difficulty is insuperable ; and it has led those who contend for the reference of *μετανοίας* to Esau, to view *αὐτήν* as looking back to *εὐλογίαν*. He could not obtain repentance

though he sought the blessing of the birthright with tears. The objections to this exposition are palpable. The seeking of the simple birthright with tears had no special tendency to help on repentance, but rather the reverse; and we should have expected the apostle to say, He obtained not repentance, because it was the birthright, and not repentance, he sought. But the use of *καίπερ* is wholly opposed to this view. Again, the reference of *αὐτήν* to *εὐλογίαν* quite dislocates the whole verse. *Εὐλογίαν* is too remote. An important statement intervenes,—*ἀπεδοκιμάσθη*; and *καίπερ* necessarily requires that the concluding clause be viewed as dependent upon the one immediately preceding.

For all these reasons, *μετανοίας* must be viewed as referring not to Esau himself, but to that change of mind which he endeavoured to produce in his father. True, the word generally bears the specific sense of repentance on account of sin; but it also bears the more general meaning of a change of purpose, which must be its signification here. To this view the objection is made, that Isaac's name is not mentioned by the apostle. But the verb *ἀπεδοκιμάσθη* manifestly suggests the idea of some one whose act the rejection spoken of is; and as the apostle is proceeding upon the declared principle that the facts of the case are familiar to his readers, the want of a name makes no difficulty. The fact was known to all, that it was his father's mind that Esau strove, and strove with tears, to change. Yet although Isaac was personally disposed to favour his first-born, he felt that the decision already given was from God, and could not be reversed. The rejection was God's act, and Isaac was merely the channel of its communication. And this might be the reason why the apostle does not mention his name either after *ἀπεδοκιμάσθη* or *μετανοίας*; and there was a propriety, too, in not mentioning the name of God, because it was to Isaac Esau made his application.

And now the question presents itself, What bearing the verse, according to the exposition we have given of it, has upon the apostle's immediate object. He is exhorting the Hebrews to cultivate holiness, to shun everything inconsistent therewith, and, in particular, to beware of such profanity as Esau manifested. And surely the evils which Esau brought

upon himself by his indifference and worldliness, were well fitted to enforce the admonition to the diligent prosecution of holiness.

This verse has always been considered one of great dogmatic interest. The fathers, in general, adopted the exposition of it which we have seen reason to reject; and the Novatians appealed to it in support of the severe views which they entertained with regard to lapsed persons. But according to the interpretation now adopted by most expositors, there is no ground for the idea that repentance really sought with tears is in any case unattainable. Tholuck, however, suggests that if a difficulty on the one hand be thus got rid of, perhaps another of equal magnitude starts up on the other in its room. May not Esau's birthright be viewed as a type of the birthright of believers in general? And if he, when once shut out from his privilege, never could be restored, will it not follow that individuals may still be so debarred from the privileges of the gospel, that however they desire them, they will strive for them in vain? Tholuck's solution of this difficulty is unsatisfactory. He says simply, we are not warranted to extend the example further than the apostle's design. But the true answer is, that the example does not admit of being extended to the length supposed. The birthright competed for by Esau and Jacob was not a type of the birthright of believers in general. It was the privilege of being at the head of the chosen race, and it could only be enjoyed by one of them. It was not participation of privileges common to all saints, but it was the exclusive possession of an exalted dignity. Having once lost this dignity, Esau could never recover it; yet it does not follow that his genuine repentance would not have secured for him pardon and acceptance with God. The analogous case to Esau's would be, not that of a common Christian cast out of the church, and kept out despite all his tears of penitence, but that of an office-bearer displaced from a position of influence, to which there might be the strongest reasons for never restoring him, although his repentance might be unquestionable, and his title to all the ordinary privileges of the church beyond dispute.

Ver. 18. The remainder of the chapter embodies a new admonition to perseverance, grounded upon the precious and ex-

alted privileges of the gospel. Vers. 18-24 exhibit the striking contrast that exists between the dispensation of Moses, whose stern features were well represented by the circumstances of terror connected with its establishment, and the religion of Christ, which overflows with benignity and love. Then vers. 25-29 urge the Hebrews to earnestness in the service of God, on the ground that, by how much the gospel is superior in grace and blessing to the law, by so much must the guilt of neglecting it be the greater, and the punishment of such neglect the more severe. The first section (18-24) sets forth in a strain of lofty eloquence the privileges of Christians, which are described in two aspects : negatively, as very different from all that had been witnessed under the law ; and positively, as placing the believer in intimate relations with God and Christ, and the whole universe of holy beings. The negative part of the description brings into view the terrible and alarming circumstances in which the law was given at Sinai, and reminds the followers of Christ that they, in receiving the new covenant, were placed in no such position of fear : *οὐ γὰρ προσεληλύθατε ψηλαφωμένῳ ὄρει, κ.τ.λ.* *Γὰρ* does not look to the immediately preceding verse, where the case of Esau is exhibited, but to the whole preceding section, where holiness is enforced ; and it is designed to introduce additional reasons and motives in recommendation of a holy and religious life. *Προσεληλύθατε* is rather a favourite word in the Epistle to the Hebrews ; it occurs at the commencement of both members of the finely balanced paragraph before us. It is not a single approach to God in some act of worship which it describes, but it is dedication to His service in the way which He Himself pleased to appoint. So in chap. x. 1, those who worshipped Jehovah according to the forms of the law are designated *προσερχομένους*, the comers thereunto. *Ὀρεῖ* of course means Mount Sinai, around which the children of Israel gathered at the giving of the law. This word affords an example of a reading undoubtedly genuine, and yet supported by an exceedingly small amount of external authority. It was unknown to Chrysostom and Theophylact. It is wanting in A, C. It is not expressed in the Peschito, Coptic, and Ethiopic versions. It has therefore been expunged by Lachmann, as deficient in that kind of evidence

to which his principles assign a decisive influence. Yet it is indispensable as a contrast to *ὄρει* in ver. 22; and without it, *ψηλαφωμένῳ* would have no word which it could qualify. How it should have disappeared from so many ancient documents, is inexplicable. Ebrard fancies that, though undoubtedly it was in the mind of the apostle as part of the sentence, yet somehow or other he neglected to write it, and thus left a blemish on his own autograph; but this is a hypothesis in which few will be disposed to concur. The mountain is characterized as *ψηλαφωμένῳ*, touched, felt. If the participial force of this word be retained, then the question arises, Touched by what? To this an answer is, touched by God or by fire. But to this the obvious objection presents itself, that *ψηλαφάω* does not mean to touch, so as to make any impression, but simply to feel. It is therefore generally agreed, that here the word must have the force simply of a verbal adjective—the mount that might be touched, or was tangible. This use of participles, though not uncommon in Hebrew, is exceedingly rare in Greek, and some altogether deny its existence. Yet some examples of it have been produced by Tholuck; and the clause before us does not seem explicable on any other principle. The object of the apostle manifestly is to designate the mountain as a physical one, that could be felt and touched. If, however, it be considered indispensable to retain the participial force of *ψηλαφωμένῳ*, then the reference must be, not to God or to fire, but to the persons addressed: Ye have not come to a mountain touched and felt by you; your mountain is of a different character.

Καὶ κεκαυμένῳ πυρί. This is made a separate clause by Calvin, Bengel, Knapp: “and to burning or kindled fire.” Others connect the words with the preceding clause: “the mountain that might be felt, and that burned with fire.” Either rendering is quite suitable to the arrangement of the words, and the tense of the participle is no greater objection in the one case than the other. The tense expresses the idea of having been set fire to, and now burning. Still, though examples are not wanting of *πῦρ* being the subject of *καίειν*, it seems more natural to make *ὄρει* the subject that agrees with *κεκαυμένῳ*. And there is one consideration which quite turns the scale in favour of this view;

and that is the passage in Deuteronomy (iv. 11, v. 23, ix. 15) where the scene referred to is described: the mountain is repeatedly described as burning with fire: τὸ ὄρος ἐκαίετο πυρὶ. That being a prominent idea in Deuteronomy, is certainly concluded to be the one the apostle here designed to express.

Καὶ γνόφῃ, καὶ σκότῳ, καὶ θυέλλῃ—and to blackness, and darkness, and tempest. These expressions are also to be found in the description of the scene in Deuteronomy, and they exhibit a striking picture of the terrific grandeur of the circumstances amid which the law was given. Clouds were round about the invisible Jehovah, and the elements were thrown into wild commotion. A trumpet also sounded to proclaim the presence of the great God of heaven, and its notes waxed louder and louder. And finally there was heard the voice of words. These words proceeded out of the thick darkness and the fire that enveloped the mountain. They were the voice of God Himself. The Lord spake to you, says Moses, out of the midst of the fire; and the voice of words ye heard. What words were these? Undoubtedly the ten commandments. Ebrard, indeed, affirms that these were not spoken till after the people manifested fear of the divine voice; and that the words which inspired them with terror were the command, If so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned or thrust through with a dart. The narrative in Exodus, however (chap. xx. 17-23), distinctly states that the ten commandments were first spoken by God, and that then the people expressed the desire that nothing more might be addressed to them in so terrible a manner.

Ἦς οἱ ἀκούσαντες παρητήσαντο μὴ προστεθῆναι αὐτοῖς λόγον. Ἦς refers to φωνῇ, and is governed by ἀκούσαντες—which they hearing. Παραιτέομαι, in the common Greek, frequently signifies to beg, to entreat; and this meaning would suit the passage before us quite well. The word, however, has another sense, viz. to deprecate, to beg off from, to refuse, which is most common in the New Testament, as in Acts xxv. 11, οὐ παραιτοῦμαι τὸ ἀποθανεῖν—I refuse not to die. This also is the meaning in ver. 25, which is obviously grounded upon the verse before us, and therefore it is best to bring this signification into play here. Nor does the negative that follows

furnish any objection, for a negative is frequently inserted after verbs of denying. What the people declined was *προστεθῆναι αὐτοῖς λόγον*. Wetstein, Bœhme, Schulz, understand this expression to mean that a word should be addressed to them, the verb being so used in Diodorus, *Halic.* vi. 88, viii. 9, x. 30 ; but the passage in Deut. v. 25 places it beyond all doubt that the meaning is, that a word should be added to them. We shall die, say they, *ἐὰν προσθώμεθα*, if we add to hear—a well-known Hebraism—if we continue to hear, the voice of God. *Προσ-τεθῆναι* refers to additional speaking on the part of God. The English version renders *λόγον* definitely—that the word should not be spoken to them any more ; and thus seems to make the people decline all acquaintance with God's commands. This, however, is not the sense. *Λόγον* does not mean *the word* in all its compass ; but it means any additional communication from God, which, though ready to hear, they preferred to be spoken to them through the instrumentality of Moses. “*Persona enim Mosis,*” says Calvin, “*interposita horrorem nonnihil mitigabat.*”

Vers. 20, 21 are thrown in as a further explanation of the terror with which the people were agitated, while assembled at the base of Sinai : *οὐκ ἔφερον γὰρ τὸ διαστελλόμενον*. *Φέρω* signifies to bear, and also to be able to bear ; and the words are therefore rightly rendered, “for they could not bear that which was commanded.” What *διαστελλόμενον* refers to is exhibited in the following clause : *κὰν θηρίον θίγῃ τοῦ ὄρους λιθοβοληθήσεται*—and if a beast touch the mountain it shall be stoned. We are not, however, to imagine, as Ebrard does, that this prohibition was the voice of words, which made the people decline hearing any more directly from God. The fact is, that this prohibition was addressed to Moses before the thunder, and by him was imparted to the people (when he came down from the mountain : see Ex. xix. 12, 13) before the thunder and tempest and trumpet-sound. It was to prepare them for the great and terrible manifestation already described. The charge not to touch the mountain is very fully exhibited in Exodus, and it refers to the people as well as to every kind of cattle. Only that portion of it, however, which mentions irrational creatures is quoted by the apostle, as calculated most strikingly

to show the dread severity and awfulness of the scene. Every circumstance was calculated to fill the people with awe. The received text embodies the phrase, *ἡ βολιδι κατατοξευθήσεται*. These words occur in the passage in Exodus; but they are now very generally acknowledged not to be genuine in the epistle. There is hardly any evidence at all in their favour; and it is not to be doubted that they have been inserted by some transcriber from the parallel passage in the Old Testament.

Ver. 21. Another illustration is introduced of the terrific character of the scene: the great lawgiver himself, who had been brought into such intimate relationship with Jehovah, trembled: *καί, οὕτω φοβερόν ἦν τὸ φανταζόμενον, Μωσῆς εἶπεν Ἐκφοβός εἰμι καὶ ἔντρομος*. *Καί* carries its conjunctive force straight on to *Μωσῆς εἶπεν*, and does not attach to *οὕτω φοβερόν*. And Moses, so terrible was the spectacle, said, I exceedingly fear and quake. This concatenation was first proposed by Beza, and has been generally followed since, as preventing the necessity of supplying any conjunction before *Μωσῆς*. *Καί*, however, is simply connective, and does not signify *even*, as Schulz, Knapp, and Böhme suppose; for if it served the purpose of thus enhancing the statement *even Moses*, there would be need of another *καί* to connect the illustrations of the two verses. Yet doubtless the second illustration is viewed by the apostle as more striking than the first. It is not *καί*, however, that serves to bring this idea into prominence, but the phrase *οὕτω φοβερόν*, whose parenthetical position marks it as a conclusion bursting from the astonished lips of the writer. *Φανταζόμενον* is equivalent to *φαινόμενον*, and refers to the scene already described, as exhibited to the view of Moses and the children. This word sometimes carries with it the idea of the unreality of the appearance to which it is applied; and therefore Erasmus argues that here it means, not what appeared, but what seemed to appear, as if the apostle meant to characterize the whole as a mere illusion. This conclusion, however, would be valid only if the word never meant anything else, which is far from being the case. It is obvious that the apostle in the preceding verse exhibits the scene as one of undoubted reality, and therefore *φανταζόμενον* must be understood as equivalent to spectacle or sight. And what was it that Moses said?

Ἐκφοβός εἰμι καὶ ἔντρομος. Now there is a historical difficulty connected with these words. Nothing of the kind is mentioned, either in Exodus or Deuteronomy, as having been spoken by Moses at the time of the dark and dreadful tempest. Therefore Beza, Estius, Schlichting, Heinrichs, conceive that the apostle must have learned the fact here stated from tradition. Calovius is of opinion that it must have been revealed to him by immediate inspiration. The greater number of interpreters, however, conceive that he refers to what Moses said with respect to the golden calf, which is thus exhibited in the Septuagint in Deut. ix. 19: *καὶ ἔκφοβός εἰμι.* That idolatrous service followed close upon the dread spectacle of the burning mountain. In the case of Moses, in particular, it would all be felt to be one continuous scene, for during the whole brief interval he was upon the mount with God, receiving those commands which the people had preferred to hear from his lips. The impressions, therefore, produced upon his mind would suffer no abatement, as in the case of the people; and therefore the alarm with which he was seized at the sight of the golden calf fabricated during his absence, might naturally enough be regarded by the apostle as resulting from all that he had witnessed since the commencement of the marvellous manifestations at Sinai. Indeed, the mountain continued burning with fire even when Moses was coming down from it (Deut. ix. 15).

The scene which the apostle has now described is viewed by him as significant of the character of the old dispensation. The law was the ministration of death. Sinai, with its blackness and darkness and tempest, furnished a symbolical representation of the terrible aspect with which the law regards those who infringe its precepts. Quite a similar view is given in Gal. iv. 24 of the old covenant, which is connected with Sinai, and described as gendering to bondage. This, however, was not the system under which the Hebrews were living. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ; and they were the disciples of the merciful and beneficent Saviour. And therefore the apostle next proceeds to exhibit the precious privileges of the gospel. What now follows forms a complete contrast to the alarming scenes described in the preceding verses. The contrast, however, cannot be traced

in the particulars of each picture as compared with those of the other, but only in the general character of the two great wholes. They do not correspond to one another part by part; but only sternness and severity pervade everything that enters into the one, while grace and glory are stamped upon every feature of the other. It has been observed, too, with regard to the particulars in the second great division, that they are hardly arranged in the order that might have been expected. However, the views taken of the arrangement fall to be modified by the interpretation of the particular clauses.

Ἀλλὰ προσελήλυθατε Σιών ὄρει. Here the contrast with the preceding paragraph is more definite than in any one of the members that follow. The words stand opposed to *ψηλαφωμένων ὄρει*. Sinai was in the desert, and it was the scene of a most terrific spectacle. Sion lay within the promised land, and it was highly celebrated for its beauty. Upon it, too, was reared the temple, where God was pleased to dwell, and where the worship of all the assembled tribes was presented to Him. The contrast with *ψηλαφωμένων*, however, shows that it is not the literal Sion that is here meant. What, then, is the idea of the apostle, when stripped of its figurative dress? Now, here it is that the views taken of this whole passage begin to diverge from one another. Already in this epistle we have found the sanctuary that stood upon Sion treated as an emblem of the sanctuary above, of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. Are we not then required, say some, in harmony with this view, to consider Mount Sion here as meaning the holy place above, where God's gracious presence is manifested, and where Christ performs the services indispensable to the spiritual wellbeing of His people? We are represented as having come to Mount Sion, because the heavenly temple is the culminating point of our whole religious system. We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, and with such an High Priest we may draw near in full assurance of faith (chap. x. 20, 21). We stand in vital spiritual connection with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands.

Καὶ πόλει Θεοῦ ζώντος, Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἐπουρανίῳ. If Sion means the holy place above, then the city of the living God,

the heavenly Jerusalem, must be the residence of the blessed in heaven. The earthly Jerusalem was the city in whose centre Sion with its temple stood ; and therefore the city here spoken of must just be heaven, the city above, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. Tholuck, Bleek, De Wette, understand Sion and Jerusalem as meaning just one and the same thing, viz. heaven, and they run the two phrases into one ; and Boehme and Kuinoel, contrary to all grammatical propriety, even make *ἐπουρανίῳ* qualify Sion as well as Jerusalem. No doubt the two ideas are very cognate: they are parts of one great leading idea ; but the difference between the earthly Jerusalem and Sion, as whole and part, as well as the apostle's declaration in preceding chapters, that not only was there a city, but also a sanctuary, seem to require that the ideas here should be distinguished as we have exhibited them. The text, too, makes two members, and couples them together with *καί*.

Estius and some others view both these members as referring to the church upon earth ; and the arguments in defence of this interpretation are by no means devoid of force. If Sinai, with its blackness and darkness and tempest, was a type of the old covenant, that served as the ministration of death, should not Sion be regarded as a type of the new covenant, of which Christ is the Mediator, and Jerusalem as a type of the Christian church, of which that covenant is the bond and centre ? Those who apply both clauses to heaven, appeal to passages of the prophets where Sion is described as the dwelling-place of God, and the source from which salvation emanates (Ps. xlviii. 3, l. 2, lxxviii. 68, cx. 2 ; Isa. ii. 2 ; Mic. iv. 1, 2). But these representations are really just as applicable to the Christian church on earth ; for believers are described as a spiritual temple in which God resides, and the church is the centre from which salvation goes forth to the nations of the world. Stier lays great stress upon the passage in Mic. iv. 1-7, as proving that Sion means heaven ; but there are many circumstances which rather seem to show that there it describes the church upon earth. When the mountain of the Lord's house is elevated above the hills, then the nations flow unto it ; and they are represented as encouraging one another to go up to Sion, that they may learn the ways of the Lord. The effect, too, of the

instructions which they receive there, is that they beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks. The whole passage seems to bear upon its face, that it describes the effect of the gospel in civilising the nations of the world, and uniting them together in one bond of Christian brotherhood. Nor does the apostle's use of the word heavenly, in describing Jerusalem, prove that the city he refers to must be heaven itself; for frequently, yea currently, in the Gospels, the new order of things introduced by Christ is designated the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven. Besides, if it be heaven only, and not earth at all, that is meant throughout this passage, as Stier, De Wette, Bleek, and the great mass of recent interpreters maintain, then where is the contrast between the old dispensation and the new? Undeniably, it is the leading object of this epistle to show that under the gospel we have advantages and privileges which were not enjoyed under the law; and the reference to Sinai in the contrasted member, so like the comparison in Galatians, seems to show that here also the superior position of Christians is the great subject. But if it be heaven only that is here meant, was it not just as true of Abraham as it is of us, that he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God? Wherein, then, lies our advantage? Manifestly this passage is silent on the subject, unless there be some reference in it to the state of the church on earth. And, according to this view, does not the word *προσεληλύθατε* more fully retain its force? This consideration, however, is not decisive; for the word must receive such a latitude of meaning as will render it applicable to *πνεύμασι τετελειωμένων*, and other similar members. Still it might not unreasonably be expected, that the first things mentioned might be such as *προσεληλύθατε* would fully and forcibly apply to. Perhaps it may be objected to the view now under notice, that it would deprive *ψηλαφωμένων* of all special propriety: for, literally considered, the two mountains were equally susceptible of being felt; and, figuratively explained, the old covenant was as remote from being an object of touch as the new. It seems, however, to be a sufficient reply to this objection, that the old covenant really had far more of externality in everything connected with it than the new.

Cramer and others try to combine both views, by making Sion mean the church militant on earth, and Jerusalem the church triumphant in heaven. But such an explanation is directly opposed to the relations subsisting between the literal Jerusalem and the literal Sion. Sion was the more elevated and sacred of the two, and it was the scene of God's more immediate presence; so that if they were to be made thus to point, the one to earth and the other to heaven, the very opposite distribution would unquestionably be the right one. But the two are so connected, that if either of them be referred exclusively to earth or to heaven, the other must be similarly restricted. Now there are strong reasons against excluding the kingdom of Christ above, and there are strong reasons against excluding the kingdom of Christ on earth. Perhaps the phrases ought just to be understood as designating the kingdom of Christ as a whole, without any definition of its locality, and as therefore comprehending both the church militant and the church triumphant. All saints living and dead constitute one great society, of which Christ is the head. Every man who believes becomes a member of this society, and enters into vital union with all its parts, whether near or distant, whether upon earth or in heaven, just as the inhabitants of the British Isles feel that they stand in a political connection not only with one another, but also with the people of Canada, and India, and Australia. And taking this extensive view, we see at once why so many different things are all grouped together, and all suspended upon the one word *προσεληλύθατε*: Ye have come, actually come, to all these, and been brought into a spiritual and vital union with them. Believers in Christ are at the present moment in the enjoyment of far higher privileges than were possessed of old. They constitute a society on which the favour of Heaven smiles benignantly; and of which Sion, which was beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, in whose palaces God was known for a refuge, furnishes an appropriate emblem. As Sinai, with its blackness and darkness and tempest, strikingly images the wrath denounced by a broken law, so the milder glories of Sion represent the peace and comfort and joy experienced by those who have embraced Christ. The wilderness in which Sinai stood, represents the desolate condi-

tion of those who trust to the law for salvation ; and so the metropolis of Judea represents the happy condition of those who are truly members of the Christian church.

Καὶ μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων, πανηγύρει καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων ἀπογεγραμμένων ἐν οὐρανοῖς. These words have been differently distributed. Some put a comma after *μυριάσιν*, and then place either the whole or a part of what follows in apposition with it. If the whole be joined to it, then the myriads are described as consisting partly of the assembly of angels, and partly of the church. To this arrangement it may be objected that *μυριάσιν* is too indefinite to stand alone. You naturally expect something to follow ; and when *ἀγγέλων* presents itself, you at once conjoin the two,—the more readily, too, as myriads of angels are frequently mentioned in Scripture. Besides, if *πανηγύρει* and *ἐκκλησίᾳ* were coupled in the manner proposed, the conjunction joining them should have been *τέ, καί*, with the peculiar use of which the apostle was well acquainted. Angels and the church, therefore, must be viewed as two separate members. Still it remains a question whether *πανηγύρει* belongs to what goes before or to what follows. In defence of the former arrangement, it may be argued that *πανηγύρει* and *ἐκκλησίᾳ* are too nearly alike in meaning to be both joined to *πρωτοτόκων*. Besides, this member of the series would then begin without a conjunction, whereas all the other members begin with *καί*. Therefore *καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ* should be viewed as a new clause. In what way, then, is *πανηγύρει* connected with *μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων* ? For a reason already stated, it is better to view it, not as governing *ἀγγέλων*, but as in apposition with *μυριάσιν* : “and to myriads of angels, a glorious company.” Thus the clause becomes quite similar in structure to the preceding one, where *Ἱερουσαλὴμ ἐπουρανίῳ* is in apposition with *πόλει*. And *πανηγυρίς*, it must be remembered, does not simply mean a meeting, but a meeting convened on some festive occasion,—a great and glorious company,—such a company as the Psalmist and Daniel describe, when they speak of thousands and thousands of thousands of angels following the Lord. Now, believers are brought into a real and vital connection with these glorious beings. Despised upon earth, they enjoy the friendship and sympathy of the bright intelligences of heaven. The angels of God regard them

as brethren, are commissioned to minister to them as heirs of salvation, and stand prepared, when their earthly career terminates, to conduct them to the mansions of felicity. Both angels and Christians are members of one great and glorious community, of which Christ is the Head. What a precious privilege this!

Καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων ἀπογεγραμμένων ἐν οὐρανοῖς. This is one of the most difficult clauses in the whole passage. Those who understand Sion and the city of God to be descriptive of heaven exclusively, feel bound to restrict this phrase, like all the rest, to the inhabitants of the upper world. They are not agreed, however, as to what class of the celestials it points to. Michaelis, Nosselt, Storr, say it means the angels, as the first created and oldest of the heavenly host, therefore called first-born; but they have been sufficiently brought into view in the preceding clause. Calvin, Bengel, Schmid, Stier, understand it of the Old Testament saints, as being the first of human beings who have entered into glory; but if this be the meaning, and if there be no reference in any other clause to this world, it is difficult to see what evidence the passage furnishes of any special privilege connected with the new dispensation. De Wette refers the clause to Christians who had already fallen asleep in Christ, perhaps by martyrdom, and had therefore first entered into heaven; while Mosheim and Schulz restrict it to Jewish converts, as being the parties of whom the church first consisted. But the principle upon which De Wette proceeds, that the persons referred to must necessarily be conceived as dead, admits of question; and the restriction to Jews would have been more plausible if this had been an epistle addressed to Gentiles, to whom it might have been represented as a privilege to be engrafted upon the old stock.

If the view we have taken of the import of Sion and the city of God be correct, then there is no necessity for referring all the clauses to the world above; and there are strong reasons for believing that the clause under review really describes the body of Christ's followers upon earth. *Ἀπογεγραμμένων* furnishes a powerful argument in support of this view. It describes persons destined for heaven rather than already there. So our Lord (Luke x. 20) said to His disciples, "Rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven." So Dan. xii. 1 promises

deliverance from approaching troubles to all whose names are written in the book of life. It is the believers upon earth, therefore, that are here meant. Some infer, however, from *πρωτοτόκων*, that it is not all believers, but only eminent believers, such as the apostles, that are meant. But it is not usual for a particular class of Christians to be called *ἐκκλησία*. This is a designation common to all. Is there any warrant, then, for giving to *πρωτοτόκων* the same extensive reference? There seems to be authority for this in Jas. i. 18: "Of His own will begat He us by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures." The spiritual birthright is common to all true believers. The clause before us, therefore, seems to describe the church upon earth viewed as destined for heaven. The first-born under the law were devoted to God; and so believers may all be described by this designation as first-born, being dedicated to His service. What a privilege, then, was it to belong to such a society!

Καὶ κριτῇ Θεῷ πάντων. The position of this clause has been regarded as a difficulty, and has been said to rest upon no clear principle. Some view it as thrown in to excite a salutary fear among the Hebrews of incurring the divine displeasure; but the design of the whole paragraph is to exhibit the glorious privileges of the gospel system. If our exposition of the preceding clause be correct, then this one occupies the best place that could be assigned to it, and must be viewed as expressing the idea that believers (whose names are written in heaven) are brought into friendly relations with the judge, and are thus sure of entering when they die among the spirits mentioned in the next member. *Προσεληλύθατε*, which stands in connection with all the members, does not express the idea of being summoned, which, coupled with *κριτῇ*, might infer danger, but rather of a privileged entrance; and therefore it speaks only of safety, implying that the judge is made a friend. The words of this clause have been differently construed. Some make *πάντων* dependent upon *κριτῇ*, but the order shows that it is governed by *Θεῷ*; and the meaning is, to the Judge, who is God of all,—an idea somewhat different, and expressing more security: You have been brought into friendly relations with a Judge who is omnipotent, who is over all, whom none can control; and therefore you are safe.

Καὶ πνεύμασι δικαίων τετελειωμένων. Here it is agreed that *πνεύμασι* means the spirits or souls of men in a separate state, and therefore the passage furnishes a clear proof that consciousness is not suspended by death. *Δικαίων* is descriptive of the righteous, who die in a state of reconciliation with God. Theophylact, Vulgate, and Luther understand *τετελειωμένων* as meaning, made perfectly holy; but it rather signifies, according to its usage in other parts of this epistle, elevated to the dignity destined for believers. The reference of the whole clause is differently estimated, according to the views taken of the other clauses. Those who understand the church of the first-born to be descriptive of Old Testament saints, restrict this to believers under the new covenant; while those who take the opposite view of that clause, generally apply this one to the righteous before the days of Christ. And so far as the words themselves are concerned, they seem equally susceptible of either application. In defence of applying them to the saints of the old dispensation, appeal is made to chap. xi. 40, where it is implied that the heroes celebrated as models of faith were all to be made perfect when Christ's work was accomplished. But that same passage also implies that, along with Old Testament saints, long departed believers who died under the gospel were immediately to become *τετελειωμένοι*; and therefore it seems to prove that both should be comprehended under the description. If, however, it be considered necessary, for the sake of preserving a distinction between the different members of the sentence, to select one or other of the two classes of departed believers, it must be the Old Testament saints that we fix upon, both because the eleventh chapter implies that they, as a body, are now *τετελειωμένοι*; and also because we have seen reason to apply *ἐκκλησία ἀπογεγραμμένων* to the saints of the new covenant.

Καὶ διαθήκης νέας μεσίτῃ Ἰησοῦ. In chap. i. 8, viii. 13, ix. 15, and everywhere else, the covenant of the gospel is designated *καινή*, which describes it as new, having come in the room of another displaced to make way for it. Here the apostle selects a different epithet, *νέας*, which means simply "recent," "fresh," and which might have been applied to this covenant, though no other had ever preceded it. Strictly speaking, *διαθήκη νέα* means, not the new covenant as opposed to the

old one, but only a covenant newly made. Bœhme, Kuinœl, De Wette, conceive that νέας is here used as equivalent to καινῆς; but the probability is, that as everywhere else the apostle employs καινῆς, he here designedly selects νέας. And it might be his purpose to suggest to the Hebrews, seeing the whole passage relates to privileges, that it was a signal advantage which they enjoyed, in being among the first to obtain the benefits of a new divine institution.

Καὶ αἵματι θαντισμοῦ, κρείττονα λαλοῦντι παρὰ τὸν Ἀβελ.
 The covenant of the gospel, like the covenant of the law, was confirmed by the blood of sacrifice; and in the case of the former, it was the blood of the Mediator Himself that was shed. The blood of the ancient sacrifice of ratification was sprinkled upon the people and upon the altar; and so the blood of Christ is represented as sprinkled upon the hearts and consciences of believers. It is only by virtue of the sprinkling of this blood that we obtain remission of sin and reconciliation to God. The blood of sprinkling is represented as speaking better things *than Abel*. Some authorities read τὸ Ἀβελ, but τὸν is supported by a decided preponderance of evidence. The meaning, however, is substantially the same. In Genesis, the blood is said to cry from the ground; but in Heb. xi. 4, Abel himself is said still to speak, with allusion, doubtless, to Genesis. In the one case, the blood speaks; in the other, Abel is conceived to speak by his blood. The superiority of the utterances of the blood of sprinkling is generally understood to lie in this, that it speaks of mercy, while Abel's blood spoke of vengeance. Christ's blood, shed by the violence of wicked men, might have spoken of vengeance; but it was the token of the most wonderful manifestation of love that was ever made. Yea, it proffered mercy to the very individuals through whose wickedness it was shed. Hammond understands the comparison to lie between the blood of the new covenant, and not Abel's own blood, but the blood of the sacrifices which he offered, called his, because he is the first person mentioned in Scripture as laying victims upon the altar to God. The sense thus brought out would be sound and good, and very suitable to the scope of the Epistle to the Hebrews; but it lies too remote from the words of the apostle. The special mention of Abel's

own blood in Genesis makes it plain that to it the apostle is here referring.

It may be asked, Why are the new covenant and the sprinkling of blood placed at the very end of the long enumeration of important objects made by the apostle, when they are the very root and ground of all Christian privileges? Doubtless they might have been placed at the beginning, as the point from which all these were suspended; but equally they might stand at the end, as the termination of a noble climax. And this position harmonizes better with the structure of the corresponding paragraph regarding Sinai and its terrors, which terminates with the expressions of alarm that fell from the lips of Moses. The conclusions of the two paragraphs thus form a striking contrast, the one speaking of terror, and the other of the merciful and benign spirit of the gospel.

Vers. 25-29. The remaining verses of this chapter present an admonition grounded upon the contrast in the preceding section, between the Mosaic institutions and the Christian dispensation. This admonition bears the closest resemblance to the practical lessons already enforced at chap. ii. 2 and x. 27, the common principle of them all being, that much greater guilt attached to the neglect of the gospel than to the violation of the old covenant; and that, consequently, if punishment was inflicted of old, much severer manifestations of wrath might be expected now. The commencement of this paragraph is somewhat abrupt, there being no connecting or illative particle; but it is only on that account the more forcible. *Βλέπετε*—beware. The warning breaks forth involuntarily, and its ground is too obvious to need formal statement. *Μὴ παραιτήσησθε*—that ye do not refuse. The word is suggested by *παρητήσαντο* in the 19th verse, and must bear a similar meaning. Refusal to listen to anything God may be pleased to address to us through any channel, is what is here forbidden. When God speaks, it is our part to hear and to obey. The refusal, however, mentioned in ver. 19 was a refusal through fear; but the refusal here condemned is such as might have its ground in unbelief or love of sin.

Different views are taken of the reference of *λαλοῦντα*, *χρηματίζοντα*, and *τὸν ἀπ' οὐρανῶν*. Is it God or Christ that is

indicated as speaking now ; and is it God or Moses that is referred to as having spoken of old ? These questions are mutually dependent, and according as you decide the one, you must decide the other. If Moses was the person here described as speaking upon the earth in connection with the old covenant, then with no propriety could God be exhibited as the person speaking from heaven in connection with the new covenant ; for this would argue not merely superiority, but a total and absolute difference. On the other hand, if you conceive that it was God who spake upon the earth of old, then you are precluded from supposing that it is Christ who is represented as the speaker now ; for this also would imply a more radical difference between the two dispensations than the apostle at all has any view of showing. It would represent the one dispensation as God's and the other as Christ's, and thus introduce disunion among the persons of the blessed Trinity. The supposition that Moses was the speaker of old, necessitates the supposition that Christ is the speaker now ; both of them acting under commission, agreeably to the representation of the first verse of the epistle. And on the other hand, the supposition that it is God whom the apostle describes as having spoken of old, equally necessitates the supposition that it is God whom he represents as still speaking to us from heaven, the prime source equally of both dispensations.

Of these several questions very different views have been taken ; and, in fact, there are such strong arguments on both sides, that it is exceedingly difficult to form a decided opinion.

In favour of the view that *τὸν λαλοῦντα*, and consequently also *τὸν ἀπ' οὐρανῶν*, refer to Christ, the connection of the verse with the 24th supplies an argument of considerable force. There Jesus is mentioned, and the word *λαλοῦντι* is applied to His blood. Naturally, therefore, in passing to the admonition grounded upon the preceding section, you think of Christ as *τὸν λαλοῦντα*. And this view is quite consistent with the whole nature of the gospel covenant, of which He is Mediator, everything being done by and through Him. He reveals God to the world, and He is constantly saying, "Come unto me." In favour of the same reference, it is an argument of no small weight, that it secures a complete and effective contrast between the closing members of the verse. For if *τὸν ἀπ' οὐρανῶν*

means Christ, then, as we have seen, τὸν ἐπὶ γῆς χρηματίζοντα must point to Moses; and the argument is, that if the Israelites were punished for disregarding what was spoken to them by Moses, much more severely may we expect to be dealt with if we disregard the invitations and warnings of the Son of God. Now this very view has already been repeatedly urged in the epistle, and might almost, in fact, be described as its leading theme; whereas, if τὸν ἀπ' οὐρανῶν be descriptive of God, then τὸν ἐπὶ γῆς must be applied to God also; and the contrast now will lie not at all in the difference of persons, but simply in the different places of speaking. The argument will be, that if Israel were punished for disregarding God speaking to them upon the earth, more severely shall we be punished if we disregard God speaking to us from heaven. Now here it seems as if the πολλῶ μᾶλλον had but small ground to rest upon. Nay, it might be urged with some plausibility, that it rather pointed in the opposite direction. God's coming down from heaven, and speaking with audible voice from the summit of a mountain to an assembled nation, might be considered a more impressive scene than His sending a messenger, however exalted; and therefore it might be argued, that the guilt of neglect in the former case would be greater than in the latter. Add to this, that God's speaking from Sinai was as really a speaking from heaven as any speaking that has taken place under the gospel; and it is, in fact, expressly so designated in the Old Testament. In Ex. xx. 22 God says, "Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven." So in Neh. ix. 13 we read, "Thou camest down also upon Mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven." Does not everything, therefore, like contrast disappear when God is supposed to be the speaker in the clauses before us; and what ground is there for the πολλῶ μᾶλλον of the conclusion to rest upon at all? These are powerful arguments in favour of the view that λαλοῦντα refers to Christ, and that consequently τὸν ἐπὶ γῆς means Moses.

But let us glance at the arguments on the other side. It is said that παραιτησάμενοι, in ver. 25, obviously points back to παρητήσαντο in ver. 19, where the refusal spoken of is the refusal to hear God's own voice; and consequently here it cannot be refusal to hear Moses that is meant. To this, however, it

may be replied, that although *παραιτησάμενοι* be undoubtedly suggested by the 19th verse, still it must refer to a different event than the one there spoken of. For the people were not blamed on account of the refusal mentioned in ver. 19. On the contrary, they were commended by God Himself: "they have well spoken;" and accordingly it was agreed, in compliance with their views, that all subsequent communications should be made to them through Moses. For the refusal here mentioned, however, they were not only blamed, but severely punished: "they escaped not." This refusal, therefore, must have been a subsequent disobedience,—probably the refusal to march at Moses' command towards Canaan; on account of which the divine decree was issued, that they should all perish in the wilderness, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb. Another argument against the view that τὸν ἐπὶ γῆς can mean Moses, has been grounded upon the word *χρηματίζοντα*, which, it is said, properly describes an act of God. Now, there is no doubt that it signifies the uttering of divine oracles, and is most frequently applied to God Himself; but it is used also with respect to prophets who make known the will of Heaven, as in Jer. xxvi. 2, xxix. 23. And perhaps the reason why the apostle, if it was his purpose to speak of Moses, chose the verb *χρηματίζω*, might be that he had repeatedly used *λαλέω* with respect to God, and wished to vary the expression with respect to Moses.

So far as the arguments hitherto mentioned are concerned, the balance turns very decidedly in favour of the reference to Christ and Moses. But there is another argument, grounded upon the commencement of the following verse, οὗ ἡ φωνή, which seems to give the preponderance to the other side. If τὸν ἀπ' οὐρανῶν means Christ, then the apostle distinctly affirms that it was Christ's voice that shook Sinai.

Now this is not a statement which there was reason to expect. Throughout the whole description of the scene at Sinai, from ver. 18 to ver. 21, there is no reference to the Son of God; and in the second chapter it is God, and Moses, and angels alone that are mentioned. But the admonition at present under review is grounded upon that scene, and therefore we expect all the facts made available in the argument to be just the resumption of things already stated. If it was Christ's voice, however,

that shook the mountain, this is new information, and therefore it does not coalesce with the ground-work laid for the argument; but if it was God's voice, then the argument stands in harmony with the previous preparatory description. And not only would the new fact appear something like travelling beyond the record; but it admits of question whether it would not lead to the very opposite conclusion which the apostle is aiming at. The great argument all along adduced for the superiority of the new covenant to the old has been, that Christ has established the one, while Moses and angels were the parties through whom the other was given; but will this argument stand if it was Christ's voice that gave the law at Sinai? The 26th verse, as compared with the 19th, and with the statements of Exodus and Deuteronomy, seems to shut us up to the conclusion that τὸν λαλοῦντα and τὸν ἀπ' οὐρανῶν really refer to God the Father. And this view derives support from the 29th verse; and also stands in beautiful harmony with the first sentence of the epistle, which is really a brief statement of its whole substance.

Assuming, then, that God is meant, let us glance again rapidly over the 25th verse, and then proceed to the more minute consideration of the 26th. *Βλέπετε*—Beware, lest ye refuse him that speaketh to you, that is, God; and the present tense is used, because through the Scriptures, and the ordinances of the gospel, and the influences of the Spirit, God is still addressing us. *Εἰ γὰρ ἐκεῖνοι ἔφυγον*. There is no small amount of authority in favour of *ἐξέφυγον*, and many prefer it. For if they, the ancient Israelites, escaped not, viz. punishment, *παρατησάμενοι*, refusing, or because they refused, τὸν ἐπὶ γῆς χρηματίζοντα, God delivering oracles to them upon earth. The refusal here meant must have been the refusal of the people to follow Moses towards Canaan, for which they were condemned to wander in the wilderness till they should all die. *Πολλῷ μᾶλλον ἡμεῖς*. Here the words *οὐκ ἐκφεύγομεν* must be supplied from the preceding clause: how much more shall not we escape *ἀποστρεφόμενοι τὸν ἀπ' οὐρανῶν*, rejecting God, *λαλοῦντα*, speaking to us from heaven. The ground of *πολλῷ μᾶλλον* obviously lies in *ἐπὶ γῆς* and *ἀπ' οὐρανῶν*. God speaks in the one case upon the earth, that is, through a messenger, viz. Moses,

who belonged to this world ; but in the other He speaks through a messenger from heaven, infinitely more dignified than Moses, and therefore entitled to greater deference. The superior claim of the gospel, therefore, as here exhibited, is substantially the same as that presented in the 2d chapter.

The 26th verse brings another ground of preference into view : οὐ ἡ φωνὴ τὴν γῆν ἐσάλειψε τότε, νῦν δὲ ἐπὶ ῥηγεται, λέγων Ἐτι ἅπαξ ἐγὼ σείω οὐ μόνον τὴν γῆν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν οὐρανόν. Here it admits of no question that τότε refers to the time of Moses, and τὴν γῆν ἐσάλειψεν is to be understood as descriptive of the physical phenomena which accompanied the giving of the law. "And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire : and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly" (Ex. xix. 18). So in Judg. v. 4, Deborah sings : γῆ ἐσεισθη . . . ὄρη ἐσαλεύθησαν ἀπὸ προσώπου Κυρίου τοῦτο Σινὰ ἀπὸ προσώπου Κυρίου Θεοῦ Ἰσραὴλ. Estius and others understand the trembling of Sinai tropically, as if it were merely a method of describing strongly the mental emotions produced among the Israelites by the scene ; but there can be no question that there was an actual shaking of the mountain, and that this is what is here described. The smoke, and fire, and barricades, were all physical, and so was the trembling.

Νῦν δὲ ἐπὶ ῥηγεται. Ἐπὶ ῥηγεται is used in a middle or active sense, as in Rom. iv. 21, and means "He hath promised." As τότε refers to the time of Moses, so νῦν must point to the times of the Messiah, the period when the apostle wrote. Does he mean, then, to say, that the promise which he is about to quote was first uttered by our Lord ? Some take this view, and conceive that the reference is either to the famous prediction in the 24th chapter of Matthew, or to some other discourse of Christ not recorded in the Gospels. But without a doubt, the promise referred to is the prediction of Haggai (ii. 6) ; and the νῦν of the apostle points, not so much to the date of the prediction, as to the period to which the prediction refers : With respect to the present or Messianic era, He hath promised. So Schlichting well : Nunc vero, scilicet evangelii temporibus, commovebit non solum terram, sed etiam cœlum, sicut promisit apud prophetam, dicens. The words of the prophet, then, are affirmed

by the apostle to have reference to the times of the gospel ; and they are presented as an argument to prove the superiority of the gospel to the law, and to evince the strong claims which the dispensation of Christ has to our respect and obedience.

What, then, is the meaning of the clause quoted from Haggai ? Few points have been more contested than this. And the leading question is, whether the words are to be understood literally or figuratively ? De Wette, Stier, Bleek, who view Sion and the city of the living God, in ver. 22, as referring, not to the kingdom of Christ upon earth, but to the glorious condition that awaits the saints in heaven after the resurrection, understand the shaking of both earth and heaven, here mentioned, to be descriptive of the physical convulsions by which the present world is to be destroyed, that a new heaven and a new earth may emerge out of the ruins, to be prepared for the dwelling-place of holy beings. Those, on the other hand, who look upon Sion and the city of God as figures of the new order of things, introduced by our blessed Lord when He appeared in the flesh—as emblems, in short, of the gospel church—view the shaking of heaven and earth here mentioned, as foretold by Haggai, as figurative descriptions of those great political changes which accompanied the introduction of the gospel. Old systems were shaken down, that a new order of things might rise in their room. And the conjunction of heaven with earth, it is said, was designed to intimate that the changes should be greater and more extensive than had occurred at any former period.

In defence of the literal interpretation of the words, and the consequent reference of them to the last day, appeal is made to the meaning of *ἐσάλευσεν* in the first clause, which undoubtedly describes a physical shaking of the earth. There is some force in this argument, but it is not decisive. For the actual convulsion of Mount Sinai at the establishment of the Mosaic institutions, might be the very thing which led to the employment of the idea of physical commotions as symbols of changes in religion and government. And there is every reason to believe that this was the fact. Mount Sinai shook when a new scheme of institutions was established : what more natural than to foretell another scheme of institutions under the idea of a

shaking of the earth ? The question, therefore, comes to be, Do the prophets employ such figures ? They do, abundantly. Remember Micah's mountain of the Lord's house. Remember Daniel's stone smiting the image, and becoming itself a mountain. Therefore more particularly the question comes to be, Is Haggai to be viewed as using a figure of this kind in the passage from which the apostle quotes ? This is really the marrow of the question. Now the prophet is describing the building of the second temple after the Babylonish captivity ; and adverting to its vast inferiority in point of splendour to the temple of Solomon, he consoles the aged men who were weeping at the contrast, with the assurance that this very house, nothing as it seemed in comparison with the former, should yet be filled with greater glory. " For thus saith the Lord of hosts, Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land ; and I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come : and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts ; and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts" (Hag. ii. 6-9).

Now here it seems past all dispute, that Haggai's words cannot refer to the physical convulsions by which the last days of this world are to be signalized. If this were what they pointed to, how could they prove anything with respect to the second temple, which was laid in ruins at the destruction of Jerusalem, so that not one stone was left upon another ? The prediction must refer to the first coming of the Desire of all nations, and to the glory with which the temple should be filled when it was honoured by His presence, and when He proclaimed in it with His own lips the words of grace and truth. And then, consequently also, it follows that the shaking of the earth, and the heavens, and the sea, and the dry land, must all be understood figuratively, and viewed as descriptive of the commotions in society, and changes of civil and religious institutions, which ushered in and accompanied the appearance of the incarnate Son of God. A great change of system was effected in Judea, which speedily extended itself to an ever-widening circle of nations. And this conclusion, so clearly resulting from the

circumstances of the passage, is greatly confirmed by another passage in the same prophet: for, addressing Zerubbabel, he repeats the words already quoted: "I will shake the heavens and the earth;" and then adds: "and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen, and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them." Does not Haggai himself thus explain the shaking of the heavens and the earth to signify changes in thrones and kingdoms—changes in the institutions and state of society? And we must presume that the apostle, quoting the words of the prophet in confirmation of his views, uses them in the same sense as the prophet, unless it could be shown that this sense was altogether unsuitable to his purpose. But it is perfectly suitable. Yea, it alone seems suitable. He is describing the abolition of the institutions established at Sinai, which for ages had remained in force, and the establishment of a new and higher order of things, which was entitled to more reverential regard, and the neglect of which inferred correspondingly greater guilt. Old things passed away, shaken by the hand of God, and a new economy was established in their room. And the extensive character of the change is indicated by the words, "not only the earth, but also heaven." The effects produced upon society by the new dispensation have been vastly more radical and wide-spread than those which resulted from the Mosaic institutions. With regard to the views of Bleek, Stier, De Wette, and the numerous circle of interpreters who understand this verse of the physical convulsions which are to usher in the kingdom of glory and the eternal blessedness of the righteous, there is this great objection, which seems to me quite unanswerable. The words of the apostle, so understood, would prove very clearly the superiority of the heavenly world to any condition upon earth; but it does not appear how they would prove the superiority of one earthly dispensation to another. For Abraham, and Moses, and David, and all the saints of old, are admitted into the heavenly world as well as we. The ground for the greater guilt we incur through disobedience, must be the greater advantages which we at the present moment enjoy as Christians, than were possessed before the advent of Christ.

Ver. 27. The 27th verse brings before us a comment of the apostle upon one expression in the passage quoted from Haggai: τὸ δέ, ἔτι ἅπαξ, δηλοῖ τῶν σαλευομένων τὴν μετάθεσιν, ὡς πεπονημένων, ἵνα μείνῃ τὰ μὴ σαλευόμενα. The general meaning of this verse is sufficiently obvious. The words ἔτι ἅπαξ, in the apostle's view, demonstrate that the dispensation of the Messiah was never to give place to another. Yet once after the prophet's day there was to be a change, but never more. Thus a new argument is evolved in favour of the superiority of the Christian economy. The argument of the 26th verse rested upon the extensive character of the changes predicted by the prophet; the argument of the 27th is grounded upon the permanency which the prophet's words ascribe by implication to the new order of things.

ἔτι ἅπαξ is understood by the apostle as emphatic: "Yet once, and no more." These words are the rendering of the LXX., and it has been alleged that they do not accurately exhibit the sense of the original. The Hebrew, it is said, should be read as one phrase: not, "Yet once, it is a little while;" but, "Yet one little while." But according to either view, the phrase seems equally suitable to the apostle's purpose. With the object of evading the difficulty connected with the alleged inaccuracy of the Septuagint, Hengstenberg conceives that the apostle's conclusion is not grounded upon the words ἔτι ἅπαξ, but that these words are mentioned merely as the beginning: τὸ δέ, this, ἔτι ἅπαξ, κ.τ.λ., proves. But Tholuck's objection to this is quite decisive, that the whole sentence is quoted in the preceding verse; and that, if the apostle had here referred to the whole, he would have simply said, τοῦτο δέ. Without a doubt, ἔτι ἅπαξ is singled out as the subject of special comment in ver. 27; and the apostle infers from it that there was to be one great change, followed by no other of a similar kind.

The import of ὡς πεπονημένων it is difficult to settle. It seems to point to some inferiority of constitution in the things spoken of, and is analogous to χειροποίητα in chap. ix. 11, 24. The things were to be shaken, ὡς πεπονημένων, as things made, that is, because of their character, or nature, or constitution. The idea of their being perishable or mutable is conceived to be embodied in the way of their having been made or appointed.

The difficulty of assigning a sufficiently definite meaning to *πεποιημένων*, has led Storr, Boehme, and Klee to connect it with *ἵνα μείνῃ* in this sense: made for the purpose that they might expect or await the imperishable, that they might remain till the things incapable of being shaken should arrive. But the objection to this rendering is, that *ἔτι ἅπαξ* ceases to be the ground of the conclusion drawn, and *μείνῃ* receives a meaning not suitable to the scope of the passage. Grotius, Bengel, and Tholuck follow the same concatenation of words; but they view *τὰ μὴ σαλευόμενα* as the nominative to *μείνῃ*, and thus make the meaning to be: that the shaken things were made to the end that the imperishable things might remain. The thought is by no means natural, and it is liable to the first of the objections stated against the preceding view. Undoubtedly, therefore, *ἵνα μείνῃ* stands connected, not with *πεποιημένων*, but with the preceding member; and *ἔτι ἅπαξ* is viewed as pointing to one great change: that the things not to be shaken might remain.

And now the question arises, What are these things shaken and dissolved, and these other things never to pass away? Those who view the preceding verse as pointing to the literal earth and heavens, view the change here described as being the dissolution of the world at the last day, to be followed by a new heavens and a new earth. But if the shaking of earth and heaven in ver. 26 describes something that took place when the Desire of all nations appeared on earth, and claimed the temple as His Father's house, then the things shaken must mean previous religious and political institutions; and the things not to be shaken, but to abide, must mean Christianity. No new dispensation is ever to come into the place of the gospel. In this view there is a perfect parallel between the passage before us and 2 Cor. iii., where the Mosaic law, or the old covenant, is described as *καταργούμενον*, and the new system of Christ, on the other hand, is described as *μένον*.

Ver. 28. As ver. 25 presents an admonition grounded upon the contrast between the old dispensation and the new, so ver. 28 exhibits substantially the same admonition, only resting upon the ideas of the immediately preceding verse. That the things not to be shaken would be understood to signify Christ's kingdom, the apostle takes for granted; and therefore he designates them

here a kingdom not to be shaken. *Βασιλείαν* means the kingdom of heaven. Those who explain the shaking of heaven and earth to refer to the final dissolution of this world, and the things not to be shaken to describe the glory of heaven, of course apply the same principle to the verse before us. And the tense of *παραλαμβάνοντες* they account for on the ground of the certainty of the hope that may be cherished in regard to the future: having such a kingdom so certainly in store for us. But those, on the other hand, who view the two preceding verses as describing the change which took place when our Lord appeared upon earth, regard the kingdom here spoken of as the Christian dispensation, which is frequently designated in the Gospels *βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ* and *τῶν οὐρανῶν*; and in this view the tense of *παραλαμβάνοντες* points to the actual existence of the kingdom, and the present enjoyment of its privileges. We are the subjects of the kingdom which our Lord has set up, a kingdom never to be moved, because no new dispensation is to displace it. Similar is the description which Daniel gives of the kingdom which the God of heaven was to set up in the days of the last of the four great monarchs (Dan. vii. 18). Doubtless the kingdom of glory is not to be shut out of view, but as little are we to forget that the kingdom of grace precedes it.

Χάριν ἔχωμεν is explained by Grotius, Estius, Cramer, and Ernesti, as meaning, Let us have or hold fast grace. But *ἔχειν χάριν* is a current phrase for having or cherishing gratitude, as in Luke xvii. 9, 1 Tim. i. 12, 2 Tim. i. 3; and this, doubtless, is the meaning here. *Κατέχωμεν* or *κρατῶμεν* is the word that must have been used to express the other idea; and besides, the article would have been indispensable in connection with *χάριν*. Chrysostom's exposition gives the true sense: *τουτέστιν εὐχαριστῶμεν τῷ Θεῷ*. Calvin, Limborch, Bengel, and others, view *παραλαμβάνοντες* as part of the admonition. Let us, receiving, cherish gratitude; i.e. let us receive the kingdom, and let us be grateful for it. But without a doubt, the first clause belongs to the subject; for you may say, receiving a kingdom; but throw it into the shape of an admonition, and the clause must be definite: let us receive the kingdom.

Δι' ἧς λατρεύομεν. This phrase, it is said, better suits with

the idea of grace than of thanks, as the meaning of *χάρις*. It really, however, consists quite well with either. Thankfulness is a principle indispensable to the acceptable service of God. Through the operation of this principle, or through the exercise of this feeling, we are enabled to present a worship to God with which He is well pleased. A thankless heart in vain cries, Lord, Lord. Yet gratitude is not the only feeling that must enter into our religious observances. Wherefore the apostle adds, *μετὰ αἰδούς καὶ εὐλαβείας*, with reverence and godly fear. The reading here is much contested. Instead of *αἰδούς*, many authorities exhibit *δέους*, and the order of the words is frequently inverted. The general idea, however, remains unaffected: fear and reverence must combine with our worship of Jehovah.

Ver. 29. A new reason is brought into view at ver. 29, having special reference to the concluding clause of the preceding verse: *καὶ γὰρ ὁ Θεὸς ἡμῶν πῦρ καταναλίσκων*. These words are to be found in Deut. iv. 24, where they seem to be suggested by the terrific scenes which the Israelites had witnessed (Deut. iv. 15). The apostle transfers them to the new covenant. Meyer says that *καὶ* does not refer to the old covenant, but only suggests that, if God is merciful, He is also just and severe. But the fact of the verse being quoted from the Pentateuch leaves no room for doubt that the apostle meant to say, that if the God of the old covenant was severe, the God of the gospel also is severe. Our God also, as well as the God of the ancient Israelites, is a consuming fire. And this was an idea not to be left out. The mercy and grace of the gospel might lead some to imagine that there was nothing like wrath now in the divine character, and they might in consequence encourage themselves in sin. This would be a fatal mistake. The attributes of God remain the same in all ages. Doubtless these are very signal manifestations of mercy in the gospel; but let that mercy be disregarded, and justice will not fail to assert her rights. Yea, her claim will be all the more terrible in consequence of the love which has been slighted. God will rain down upon the wicked fire and brimstone, an horrible tempest. This shall be the portion of their cup.

CHAPTER XIII.



HAT follows of this epistle exhibits practical admonitions, some of them of a more general character, and others more intimately connected with the scope of the epistle, though all of essential importance.

Ver. 1. The first has respect to brotherly love: *ἡ φιλαδελφία μενέτω*. In the common Greek writers, *φιλαδελφία* is applied to the affection cherished between those who are brothers and sisters in the literal sense of the terms. In the New Testament the word never bears this sense, but only designates the love which the brotherhood of believers should cherish to one another. It thus affords a fine illustration of the benignant and uniting tendency of the gospel. By faith in Christ, men previously alienated from one another become members of one family, and are made to feel that they are all brethren. Their affections overleap all distinctions of country and race and colour, and they recognise every disciple of Christ as the proper object of brotherly love. The influence of the gospel in extinguishing feuds, and knitting the most hostile to one another, excited the astonishment of the heathen world; and they exclaimed, "Behold how these Christians love one another!" *Μενέτω* suggests the idea that the Hebrews had not overlooked the duty which is here enforced. And, in fact, very honourable testimony has already been borne by the apostle in chap. vi. 10, x. 33, to their Christian attachment and mutual sympathies. The love they had thus shown must not be allowed to languish; it must continue. Perhaps the evils which the apostle has had occasion to reprehend, their backsliding and neglect of duty, might have somewhat damped the ardour of their first love; and there might be occasion for the admonition

to continue cherishing brotherly sympathy with one another. No duty is more congenial to the gospel, or of higher practical importance, than that of Christian love.

Ver. 2. The admonitions which follow in the 2d and 3d verses are closely connected with that of the 1st. They have respect to particular modes in which it was of importance that the general principle of brotherly love should more particularly at that time manifest itself: *τῆς φιλοξενίας μὴ ἐπιλανθάνεσθε*. The claims of hospitality have always received particular attention in the East. And as the followers of Christ, by their peculiar principles, cut themselves off from the sympathies both of Jews and Gentiles, it was the more needful, when they visited foreign parts, that they should receive the greater attention from one another. It is hospitality as shown to Christian brethren that is specially meant by the apostle. So Peter says (1 Pet. vi. 9), "Use hospitality one to another without grudging;" and Paul couples the words *ταῖς χρείαις τῶν ἁγίων κοινωνοῦντες* with *τὴν φιλοξενίαν διώκοντες* (Rom. xii. 13). The admonition not to forget, is not to be understood as implying that the Hebrews had been negligent; it is only an emphatic way of enforcing the remembrance and the practice of the duty. A motive is suggested in the second clause of the verse: *διὰ ταύτης γὰρ ἔλαβόν τινες ξενίσαντες ἁγγέλους*. The idiomatic use here made of *ἐλαβον* nowhere else occurs in the New Testament, nor in the Septuagint. It is quite a classical construction, and by means of the leading verb expresses an idea which adverbially qualifies the participle: Some entertained angels unawares. There can be no doubt that the apostle refers particularly to the case of Abraham and Lot. True, it seems to be intimated in Gen. xviii. 19 that these patriarchs were quite aware of the high dignity of the individuals by whom they were visited. We are not to suppose, however, that they knew them from the very first, but only that they became aware of their character before the termination of their visit. They received them at first simply as strangers. But how, it may be asked, can the appearance of angels to Abraham be employed to enforce upon us the practice of hospitality, when we have no reason at all to expect that, however extensive be the kindness we show to strangers, we shall

ever behold angels under our roof? But wherein lay the advantage of a visit from angels? It was in the blessing which they brought with them, in their heavenly conversation, in their precious communications and holy demeanour. Now the same advantages are obtained when, showing kindness to a stranger, you find him to be a man of exalted excellence, of richly furnished mind, of benevolent and sanctified affections. He becomes a messenger of God to your soul; and the effect of his intercourse with you, is to stimulate you to new ardour in the prosecution of your Christian course. And not only so, but our Lord's words (Matt. xxv. 35) show that even He Himself is entertained as a guest by His people when they receive the friendless and the stranger in His name: "I was a stranger, and ye took me in: for inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." Calvin's remark is an excellent one: "*Si quis objiciat, rarum illud fuisse, responsio in promptu est, non angelos tantum recipi, sed Christum ipsum, quum pauperes in ejus nomine recipimus.*"

Ver. 3. Another way in which the general principle of brotherly love mentioned in the first verse is to be manifested, is brought into view in ver. 3: *μνησθε τῶν δεσμῶν, ὡς συνδεδεμένοι τῶν κακουργημένων, ὡς καὶ αὐτοὶ ὄντες ἐν σώματι.* Imprisonment for the faith was a form of suffering to which the Hebrews were not strangers; and they had already manifested sympathy towards those of their brethren who were suffering under this distress, as the apostle mentions at chap. x. 33. Now the admonition here given is, that they should continue to cherish the same Christian disposition. Obviously the duty thus inculcated must be viewed as including prayer and assistance. They should pray for their brethren when thrown into dungeons; they should visit them when they can obtain access to their places of confinement; they should afford them all the assistance which it is in their power to render, and they should strive to effect their liberation. The motive by which the admonition thus given is enforced, is expressed in the words *ὡς συνδεδεμένοι*. Now the supposed necessity of making *ὡς* indicate precisely the same kind of connection in the two analogous clauses of this verse, has occasioned some

little violence to be done, particularly to the first clause. Bœhme, Heinrichs, and others, have conceived the meaning of *ὡς συνδεδεμένοι* to be, as being joined together in one body, viz. Christ, as being members of the same spiritual community; but obviously this exposition brings more out of the words than can with any propriety be conceived to be in them. The meaning appears simply to be, as bound along with them. The Hebrews were to put themselves in the position of the sufferers, and to feel their bondage as if it were their own. Genuine sympathy always presupposes such an ideal substitution of one's self in the room of others, and the very etymology of the word points to this origin of the feeling. Conceiving themselves bound like their brethren, the Hebrews would cherish the more tender sympathy for them, and would be the more disposed to make an effort for their deliverance. Along with the specific calamity of bonds, the apostle brings into view the idea of suffering in general: Remember also *τῶν κακουργουμένων*, those injured or maltreated in any way. Of course in both cases the imprisonment and the ill-usage are to be equally conceived as having reference to sufferings inflicted and borne for the sake of Christ. Connected with this clause is the motive: *ὡς καὶ αὐτοὶ ὄντες ἐν σώματι*. By *σώματι* here, Calvin and others conceive the body of Christ, viz. the church, to be meant; but the language is too indefinite to express this idea. Some genitive connected with *σώματι*, or at the very least the article, would have been indispensable. Without a doubt the meaning is: as being yourselves also in a body, living upon the earth as frail creatures, and therefore liable to the same distresses and sufferings. So Ecumenius: *εἰ γὰρ τις ἀναλογίσαιτο, ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς περικείται ὁμοιοπαθὲς ἐκεινοῖς σῶμα ἐλεήσει μᾶλλον αὐτοὺς διὰ τε τὴν συμπάθειαν καὶ διὰ τὸν φόβον μὴ τὰ ὅμοια ἐκ τῆς ἀπανθρωπίας πάθῃ*.

Ver. 4. From brotherly love, hospitality, and sympathy with the afflicted, the apostle makes a transition to the love of the conjugal state: *τίμιος ὁ γάμος*. Erasmus, Beza, etc., supply *ἐστίν*, making the clause a statement that marriage is honourable. But the fact that the three preceding verses are admonitions, as also those that follow, and more particularly the consideration that ver. 5 is precisely of the same construction

as the one before us, render it indispensable to supply ἔστω. Besides, although the first clause of this verse might be viewed as a statement, this is quite inadmissible in the case of the second; for with no propriety could it be declared as a general truth, that the marriage-bed is undefiled. With ἐστὶν as the supplement, it would be indispensable to view ἀμύαντος not as a predicate, but as part of the subject, thus: marriage and an undefiled bed are honourable. Without a doubt, therefore, the meaning is: Let marriage be held in honour, and let the bed be undefiled. Generally γάμος denotes a wedding, but here obviously it means the state of marriage, as in the adjective ἄγαμος.

It has been much disputed whether ἐν πᾶσι should be viewed as neuter or masculine. Protestant interpreters in general have taken the latter view, and have employed the verse as an argument against the celibacy of the Church of Rome. If the verse were viewed as a statement, then the argument would have some force, as it might mean: Marriage is honourable in all persons, or in all ranks and conditions of men; although some who even follow this construction represent its meaning as being: Marriage is held in honour among all nations. But if the clause be hortatory, as we have seen that it is, then the force of the argument does not appear to be great; for it must mean: Let marriage be held in honour among all. Only if you connected ἐν πᾶσι with the subject, would it bear obviously upon celibacy: Let marriage in all persons be honourable. But this phrase seems to belong to the predicate; and it must describe not the married only, but all mankind, the unmarried as well. The married must honour marriage, by scrupulously and faithfully shunning every course in any degree inconsistent with the purity of the marriage-bed. And equally the unmarried must honour marriage, by recognising it as the only condition in which it is allowable for them to follow the impulse of certain desires. And that the word πᾶσι, if taken as masculine, would require to have this extent of reference, seems obvious from the concluding clause, where both πόρνους and μοιχοὺς are mentioned,—the one a description of single persons who violate the laws of chastity, and the other a description of married persons who incur this guilt. All,

whether married or unmarried, are bound to honour marriage as a divine institution or ordinance.

After all, however, it may be doubted whether *ἐν πᾶσι* should not rather be viewed as neuter. This phrase and *ἐν παντί* are of frequent occurrence in the New Testament, in the sense of, in all respects, in everything, as in Col. i. 18, Tit. ii. 9, 1 Tim. iii. 11, 2 Tim. iv. 5, Eph. v. 24, Phil. iv. 12, etc. It is argued, too, by Bleek and Delitzsch, that if persons were meant, the simple dative, or the dative with *παρά*, was to be expected. Besides, the two clauses of the verse seem to hang better together, for the first lays down a general principle: Let marriage be held honourable in all respects; and then the second mentions a particular respect of especial importance: and let the bed be undefiled. This above all is to be observed; for in vain you pretend to honour marriage in some respects, if you err in regard to this leading point. And it is worthy of consideration whether, after all, this view of the verse do not supply a ground from which a more effective battery can be directed against the enforced celibacy of the Church of Rome; for surely, if marriage be in itself so honourable a condition, it must be the highest presumption for men, without any warrant from Scripture, to stamp it as a state that is calculated to contaminate any order of men whatever. And, accordingly, forbidding to marry is described as a token of apostasy from the truth. The verse concludes with a statement of the judgment in store for those who dishonour marriage. In the concluding clause of this verse the received reading is *δέ*; but A, D, M, the Coptic, and the Vulgate, have *γάρ*, and Griesbach and Lachmann adopt this reading. So far as internal evidence is concerned, if the preceding clause be viewed as a statement, then *δέ* would be the proper reading; but if *ἔστω* be the right supplement, then the claims of *γάρ* would appear preferable. Delitzsch decides against *γάρ*, on the ground that it has the appearance of being a reading designed to smooth a difficulty; but the same thing may be said of *δέ*, from the standpoint of an opposite view of the first clause. It has been well remarked that there is something emphatic in the position of *ὁ Θεός*. Violations of chastity are too often lightly regarded in the world. Human laws can do little to bring such sins to punishment. But let not transgressors, whether unmar-

ried or married, whether chargeable with whoredom or adultery, flatter themselves with hopes of escape, for their doom is certain and terrible. God will judge.

Ver. 5. In sundry parts of Paul's epistles (1 Cor. v. 10, vi. 9; Eph. v. 3; Col. iii. 5) we find unchastity and avarice exhibited together, as both excluding from the kingdom of heaven. And here the writer passes directly from the one of these subjects to the other, which favours the idea that Paul had something to do with the preparation of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Ὁ τρόπος denotes manner of life, disposition of mind, and course of conduct resulting therefrom; and it is very well represented by the English word conversation in its old meaning. The feature of character whose cultivation is enjoined, is freedom from covetousness. The life of a Christian should exhibit no stain of worldliness. The love of money is the source of innumerable outward evils, and it exerts a very hardening influence upon the heart. And next follows the clause ἀρνούμενοι παροῦσιν, which is analogous in sense, and similarly elliptical. Two clauses connected in the same manner occur in Rom. xii. 9: ἡ ἀγάπη ἀνυπόκριτος; ἀποστιγνοῦντες τὸ πονηρόν. In all these the finite verb must be supplied; and the meaning of the words before us is, "Be contented with the things you possess." This verb occurs in two very different constructions, ἀρκεῖ μοί τι and ἀρκοῦμαι τι; but the meaning of both is the same. This admonition to contentment, which is a virtue of signal value, does not mean that we are to sit down indolently in whatever circumstances we find ourselves, without making the slightest effort to better our condition. The Scriptures themselves admonish us to diligence in business; and they assure us that the prudent man guideth his affairs aright, and that the hand of the diligent maketh rich. The meaning of the apostle is, that while it is our duty to put forth efforts in the discharge of all business that claims our attention, we must be ever disposed to leave the results in God's hand, and to acquiesce cheerfully in all the arrangements of His providence. If He sends to us disappointment, and tries us with poverty, we are to suppress every murmur, and to cherish a spirit of contentment.

The admonition to contentment is enforced by an appeal to Scripture: αὐτὸς γὰρ εἶρηκεν. Here αὐτὸς is emphatic. It

designates God as habitually present to the believer's mind, and so present that He may be spoken of without being named. Instances of this are quite common in the conversation of pious people, who will often say, *His* will be done, *Himself* hath done it. The first part of what God is here represented as saying is to be found pretty exactly in Josh. i. 5, Gen. xxviii. 15, and Isa. xli. 17; and the sentiment of the second part occurs in Deut. xxxi. 6, 8, and 1 Chron. xxviii. 20, although in both these passages it is spoken in a different person, concerning God rather than from God. The sentiment is the same. And it is a very remarkable fact, that the words thus gathered from different parts of Scripture, and slightly changed in form, though not in sentiment, are to be found in Philo in precisely the same shape. Some have therefore supposed that the words, as here exhibited, have been cited directly from Philo. Others have rather conceived that they must have come to form part of some liturgical writing used in the synagogue, and from this source have been borrowed by Philo and the author of our epistle. It is not remarkable that Philo should quote them, nor is it remarkable that Paul should quote them; but it is surprising that, taken as they are from very different portions of Scripture, they should be conjoined by two such different writers, and moulded into a somewhat new shape, and that the same in both.

Ver. 6. These promises of God are next exhibited as a reason why we may confidently look to God as our helper: *ὥστε θαρρουντας ἡμᾶς λέγειν, Κύριος ἐμοὶ βοηθός, καὶ οὐ φοβηθήσομαι· τί ποιήσει μοι ἄνθρωπος.* What God has said, is adduced as a reason why we may use the words here exhibited. They are quoted from Ps. cxviii. 6, where they form part of a festive song that was sung at the passover: God is a helper to me; and this being so, there is no reason why I should cherish any fear. The arm of man can do no real damage to those whom God helps and defends. The only point that admits of doubt with respect to this quotation is, whether the last clause should be viewed as a separate member, or as dependent upon *φοβηθήσομαι*. In the Psalm, *τί ποιήσει* forms a new member; and therefore the same view should be taken here, although the Vulgate takes a different course, and renders thus: "Non timebo quid faciat mihi homo."

Ver. 7. The connection of this verse with what goes before has been differently estimated. One idea is, that, having been quoting passages from the word of God, the apostle is thereby led to think of the preachers of the word and the rulers of the church; but this *nexus* does not appear very likely. It seems much more probable that the idea of contentment spoken of immediately before supplies the link of union. There were times of persecution, which tried the faith of God's people, when their goods were spoiled, and they were reduced to sore straits. While looking to God, therefore, as their helper, let the Hebrews remember those instructors now gone, who had borne up under many difficulties, and adhered to their religion till death removed them from this earthly scene. Some have regarded *μνημονεύετε τῶν ἡγουμένων ὑμῶν* as an admonition to be mindful of spiritual teachers and rulers while still living, so as to aid them in their struggles, and to supply their wants; but the concluding member of the verse, which makes reference to their removal from time, shows that the words are an admonition to be mindful of them, so as to imitate their example. *Ἡγουμένων* does not denote, as some imagine, any particular order of office-bearers, existing only in some churches; but it is a general designation, like *προϊσταμένους* in 1 Thess. v. 12, embracing all who took part in the government of the church, whether as apostles, evangelists, or teachers. *Ἀναθεωροῦντες* expresses the idea of a careful and prolonged consideration. *Ἐκβασιν τῆς ἀναστροφῆς* has been conceived by some to denote issue or consequence of their conversation, that is, happy condition in heaven; but it is a sufficient refutation of this view, that the blessedness of the departed is not an object which we can scrutinize, much less remember. *Μνημονεύετε* and *ἀναθεωροῦντες* alike point to the termination of earthly life, as what *ἐκβασιν ἀναστροφῆς* must mean; and in fact this phrase, considered in itself, is much better adapted to express this idea than the one stated above. The Hebrews were to remember and meditate upon what they had witnessed in the career of their departed rulers. The manner in which faith had enabled them to withstand temptations, and to struggle on to the last, amid difficulties and trials, so that they preferred martyrdom rather than deny the God that bought them, could not but be to surviving be-

lievers a most profitable subject of meditation. The constancy manifested through life by teachers now gone, would have the effect of stimulating the Hebrews, if they engaged their thoughts with the subject, to imitate their example, and to lead lives of holy and persevering obedience. Doubtless the proto-martyr Stephen, James whom Herod slew with the sword, and James the brother of the Lord, must be viewed as included among the *ἡγούμενοι* here spoken of.

Ver. 8. From the reference in ver. 7 to teachers now gone, who were followed by other teachers destined to pass away in a similar manner, a very natural transition is made to Jesus Christ, who is infinitely exalted above all change, and reigns in heaven, a sure bond of union to His people. The same Saviour in whom the departed found refuge, and who supplied them with strength for all the conflicts of time, still lives to bless every believer who confides in His promises. Some have proposed to take *Ἰησοῦς* here as the subject, and *Χριστός* as the predicate; but the want of the article leaves no ground for reasonable doubt that "Jesus Christ" is the subject, and "the same" the predicate: Jesus Christ is the same. *Σήμερον*, of course, refers to the present time, the time then present to the Hebrews and the apostle. And what does *χθές* designate? Some say it points back to the eternity of Him who was with God in the beginning; and certainly the third note of time, *εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας*, supplies an argument of some force in defence of this view; for as it extends indefinitely forward, so the first might be viewed as reaching indefinitely backward. But if Jesus Christ be the proper designation of the incarnate Son of God, then, although His pre-existence as God is not for a moment to be questioned, still here *χθές* may with most propriety be viewed as designating the years that have passed since His birth, or ministry, or ascension. What He was to His first disciples, He still is to living believers, and the same He will continue to the end of time. This seems to be what the context requires us to understand as the meaning of the verse. For the time past referred to by the apostle is that during which the instructors of the Hebrews now gone lived among them; and the same grace and strength which the Saviour imparted to them, He is still able and willing to bestow. Under-shepherds may be removed, but the chief

Shepherd never changes. Perhaps also it may be viewed as a fair inference from the 7th verse, that *ὁ αὐτός* has a double reference. Jesus Christ was, and is, and ever will be, the great subject of the gospel, the central theme of all evangelical preaching; and not only is He the unchanging subject of Christian truth, but He is also the never-failing guardian of His church, protecting her by His power, and sanctifying her by His grace.

Ver. 9. The great principle, that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, is naturally followed by an admonition to cleave to the one true doctrine, and not to go after strange opinions: *διδασκαίς ποικίλαις, κ.τ.λ.* The received reading, *περιφέρεσθε*, means, as in Eph. iv. 14, "Be not carried about, driven hither and thither, with every wind of doctrine." But since the days of Griesbach it has been generally acknowledged that the most thoroughly accredited reading is *παραφέρεσθε*, which means, "Be not carried away, or hurried onwards, by strange and novel notions." Now, with regard to the doctrines that are here referred to, it is obvious that they must be views and opinions that were current at the time, and with which the Hebrews were in some danger of being infected. And in forming a judgment what these were, it seems clear that we must be regulated by the reason assigned in the concluding part of the verse: *καλὸν γὰρ χάριτι βεβαιώσθαι τὴν καρδίαν, οὐ βρώμασιν*. Without a question, the strange doctrines spoken of were in some way or other connected with the meats here mentioned; and according to what we suppose these meats to have been, will be the view we form of the doctrines in question.

Now, two courses are here taken by interpreters. It is conceived by a Lapede, Schlichting, Limborch, Michaelis, Storr, Paulus, etc., that *βρώματα* here designates the sacrificial feasts, such as the passover, of which the worshippers partook after the victim was duly slain and offered. On the other hand, it is supposed by Theodore, Theophylact, Calvin, Erasmus, Beza, etc., that *βρώματα* here has reference to the distinctions made in the Jewish law between clean and unclean animals, between meats permitted and forbidden. In defence of the former of these views, it is argued by Bleek that not only, of course, were

many of the sacrifices eaten as food, but also that *βρώματα* more naturally expresses the idea of meats eaten than of meats shunned; so that if the latter had been the apostle's idea, we might have expected him rather to mention the laws regarding food. Another argument in defence of the same view is grounded upon the 10th verse, where mention is made of an altar, of which—that is, of the sacrifices laid thereon—certain parties have no right to eat. On the other side, however, it is argued that *βρώματα* is never employed in the Septuagint to designate the sacrifices viewed as used for food; while it is of constant occurrence in describing the distinctions of clean and unclean meats. In the New Testament also, *βρώματα* is the word employed for foods, whether considered as permitted or forbidden, as in Rom. xiv. 15, 1 Cor. vi. 13. And there is another argument on the same side of very great weight, viz. that, according to this view, it is at once apparent what the diverse and strange doctrines were that are alluded to, and also that, in fact, they did very greatly perplex the primitive church; whereas, according to the other view, there is no mention made in Scripture of any differences of doctrine which can be supposed to be grounded upon the use of part of the sacrifices for food. In Rom. xiv. 14, the Apostle Paul makes pointed reference to the disputes that prevailed regarding the use of things common or unclean; and while avowing his own belief that there was nothing now common in itself, he yet allows that where there was a conscientious conviction of uncleanness, there it was a duty to abstain. So also in Col. ii. 22, the prohibitions, "Touch not, taste not," are described as commandments and doctrines of men; and in 1 Tim. iv. 3, *ἀπέχεσθαι βρωμάτων* is ranked among *διδασκαλίας δαιμονίων*. To the same differences Paul alludes when he says (Rom. xiv.), "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." And with regard to the argument of Bleek, that *βρώματα*, in this view, is made to mean "refusal of food," it is altogether destitute of weight; for the meats which were conceived to benefit and strengthen religiously were not those rejected, but those considered clean, and therefore used. The only argument against this reference of *βρώματα* that seems of any considerable weight, is the connection with the 10th verse,

where an altar is mentioned, of which certain parties eat ; but perhaps it is a sufficient answer to this argument, that the laws of food and the offering and participation of sacrifice were not altogether disconnected, seeing that in Lev. xi. these laws are introduced in connection with the dedication of the sanctuary, the altar, and the priest. Upon the whole, therefore, it seems preferable to understand *βρώματα* as meaning foods, meats, conceived as clean, in distinction from those unclean. And according to this view, the doctrines mentioned at the beginning of the verse are just the doctrines described in the passages cited as occasioning so much dissension in the primitive church. These doctrines are characterized as *ποικιλαις*, because of the variety of shapes in which they appeared, some persons carrying their scruples to a far greater extent than others. They are also described as *ξέναις*, "strangers," because they were alien to the spirit and genius of Christianity. Not with meats, however carefully selected, nor indeed by any merely external observance, is the heart to be strengthened, but only with grace from heaven. The kingdom of God is not meat and drink. And this statement is confirmed in the clause that follows : *ἐν οἷς οὐκ ὠφελήθησαν οἱ περιπατήσαντες*. Here *ἐν οἷς* is connected, not with *ὠφελήθησαν*, but with *οἱ περιπατήσαντες* : Those walking in which, those observing which restrictions, have obtained no spiritual benefit from them. They have found them unprofitable, agreeably to the affirmation of chap. vii. 18 regarding the whole law : *διὰ τὸ αὐτῆς ἀσθενὲς καὶ ἀνωφελές*. Yet this does not mean that no kind of benefit had ever resulted from the observance of the ceremonial law. It had served important purposes. But the apostle's meaning is, that mere outward appliances do not of themselves reach the conscience, so as to purge it from guilt, and to foster the growth of holy principles within.

Ver. 10. When *βρώματα* in the preceding verse is viewed as referring to the Jewish sacrifices, it seems as if the connection of this verse were better accounted for and more clearly exhibited ; but the other view also secures a natural enough transition. It is not any meats, however ceremonially clean, that will strengthen the soul, but we must have the grace of the gospel in our hearts ; and we must eat spiritually of Christ, the true sacrifice offered for the life of the world. *Ἐχομεν θυσιαστή-*

ρῖον. The altar here spoken of has been conceived by Bleek and Bretschneider to be situated in heaven, in connection with "the sanctuary and the true tabernacle" (Rev. vi. 9, xiv. 18); but the Jewish altar of burnt-offering was outside the sacred building, and accordingly our Lord suffered upon earth. Besides, it is His blood, and not His flesh, which He is represented in our epistle as carrying into heaven, so that no room is left for doubting that the altar of our text was upon earth. It is the golden altar alone to which there is mention made of an antitype or counterpart in heaven (Rev. viii. 3), for incense and not sacrifice is laid upon it. It has always been a favourite idea in the Church of Rome, that the Lord's table is the altar here spoken of; but as it is an utterly unscriptural idea that the bread and the wine are a sacrifice at all, it is equally obvious that with no propriety can the Lord's table be designated an altar. Theodoret, Calvin, Beza, Crellius, Michaelis, and Kuinöel suppose that the apostle had no particular reference to any object when he used the word *θυσιαστήριον*; but this surely is an idea not at all to be admitted. What, then, is the altar spoken of? There is another view which has prevailed to a considerable extent, that Christ Himself is the altar; and some say that His body is the altar, and His soul the sacrifice, agreeably to Isaiah, "when He shall make His soul an offering for sin;" but it is a sufficient refutation to say that it was not His soul only, but His body and His soul together, that constituted the offering He made. Others say it was His divinity that was the altar upon which His humanity was offered, on the ground stated in Matt. xxiii. 19, that it is the altar that sanctifieth the gift; but there seems something repulsive in the idea of thus dividing the person of Christ, and setting up His divinity as an altar. I should feel rather disposed just to say that Christ was the altar. Unlike priests of old, He was priest, altar, and victim all in one. He was priest, not in His divinity only, nor in His humanity only, but as God-man; and if He could *thus* be priest at the same moment of being victim, He could equally be the altar in His whole person. With respect, however, to the idea of the victim, it is obvious that it was the human nature of our Lord alone that suffered; but the value of His offering lay in this, that it was of a person who was both God and man. Another

idea, and the most widely prevalent of all, is, that the cross is meant. It was to the cross our Lord was brought as an offering for sin ; it was upon the cross He uttered the exclamation, "It is finished." And it is obvious from ver. 12 that the apostle has the scene of Calvary in his view, for he speaks of our Lord as suffering without the gates of Jerusalem. The cross, although originally a term of disgrace and opprobrium, is now enshrined in the affections of myriads, and surrounded with glory. Now, of this altar—that is, of the offering laid upon it—it is implied that certain persons have the privilege of eating, for certain other persons are excluded. Yet Christians partake of the Christian sacrifice, just as the Jews of old did of many of the victims. It is a spiritual participation, however, which alone is here meant. We feed upon Christ by faith. It is this feeding which is described by Jesus, when He speaks of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man. And while it is thus implied of certain persons that they have a right to eat of the Christian altar, it is affirmed of others that they are excluded. It is a strange view which is taken by Schlichting, Schulz, and Heinrichs, that οἱ τῇ σκηνῇ λατρεύοντες designates Christians, as if σκηνῇ meant the body of Christ or the heavenly tabernacle ; and that the import of the whole verse is : we have an altar of which the worshippers do not at all partake, as was the practice under the law. This interpretation is at direct variance with 1 Cor. x. 14–22, where the eating of the body and blood of Christ is spoken of ; and it is also irreconcilable with the change of person in the verbs ἔχομεν, ἔχουσι. Generally, λατρεύειν is followed by the dative of a person, designating the object of worship, as Θεῷ, to worship God. This is the invariable usage of the Septuagint ; and when the means or place of service are mentioned, the preposition ἐν is used, as in Josh. xxiv. 14 : λατρεύειν αὐτῷ ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ. Now, as there is no preposition here, it seems as if usage obliged us to make σκηνῇ the object of the service, so as to mean, not those serving God in the tabernacle, but those serving the tabernacle. Whether something of an idolatrous feeling be ascribed to the parties spoken of, as if they made their worship terminate upon the tabernacle, admits of doubt, although Delitzsch comes to this conclusion on the ground of the uniformity with which the

verb is construed with the dative of the object of worship. There is, however, one case overlooked by him in Luke ii. 37, where Anna the prophetess is commended, and yet is described as *νηστείας καὶ δεήσεσι λατρεύουσα*, which words surely mean, "serving with fasting and prayers;" or if the fastings and prayers be the object of the service, agreeably to the analogy of other occurrences of the word, still they cannot mean that she made her religion terminate in these services: they can only mean, devoted to fastings and prayers; and so the phrase may just mean serving the tabernacle that is devoted to the service of God in this department of duty. And the parties spoken of must of course be the priests, who are similarly described in chap. viii. 5. And the meaning of the verse must be, that as the office of the ancient priesthood was figurative of Christ, and all true priesthood is now concentrated in Him, those who persist in retaining this office after His sacrifice has been offered, cut themselves off from the benefit of that sacrifice. They cleave to the shadow when the substance has come. They pay homage to the viceroy when the King himself is in the midst of them. It is the priests that are specifically mentioned; but of course it is obvious, that if their services are incompatible with their own enjoyment of Christ, the same thing must hold good of the people who join with them in the observance of Jewish rites. The principle of this verse is the same as the dictum of Paul, "Ye are fallen from grace, whosoever of you are justified by the law."

Vers. 11, 12. Of the statement exhibited in ver. 10, the two verses that follow are designed as a confirmation, which does not rest upon general principles, but is typologically grounded in the law itself. Of many of the ancient offerings the priests obtained a definite portion by express divine appointment (Lev. xvi. 27); but there were others, such as those of the great day of annual atonement, of which nothing was assigned to them, but the whole was burned without the camp. Now something analogous to these holocausts the apostle finds in the fact that Christ suffered without the gates of Jerusalem; and just as the priests were not allowed to participate of the former, so neither had they part or lot in Christ, for they themselves drove Him out from amongst them. The ancient regu-

lation regarding the sin-offering was thus a kind of figurative prediction of the exclusion of those from participation of Christ; and the apostle's use of the word *διὸ* seems to intimate that he considered there was a real and designed connection between the things he mentions, and not a mere casual one. *Παρεμβολή* designated the camp of old, within which the tabernacle was, and to which afterwards the city of Jerusalem with its temple corresponded; and as the holocaust was burnt without the camp, so Christ suffered without the gate. And the great High Priest and sacrifice of the gospel being thus ignominiously cast out from the central seat of Judaism, the priests, and indeed all who adhere to this religion as their ground of hope, lose the privilege of partaking of the Christian sacrifice. As it is the high priest that is here mentioned, and the great day of annual atonement that is referred to, it is obvious that *τὰ ἅγια* here means the most holy place, as in chap. ix. 8, 12, x. 19. The matter of our Lord's sacrifice is here exhibited. *Διὰ ἰδίου αἵματος* intimates that it was Himself, His own life, He offered, and not something else, like the Jewish priests; and *ἀγίαση τὸν λαόν* shows that His propitiation, on the other hand, had reference not at all to Himself, but only to the people. In the case of the Jewish offerings, both the burning of the victims, and the carrying of their blood into the most holy place, are here mentioned; but it is the former only upon which the stress of the comparison here lies, and the latter is mentioned simply as the means of indicating the objects that are meant. Accordingly, the apostle does not here bring into view what is so fully handled in chap. ix., the entrance of Christ into the heavenly sanctuary; but he speaks only of His suffering, and that without the gates of Jerusalem. To Christ's suffering, and suffering upon earth, corresponded the slaughter of the beasts, and the burning of their bodies without the camp. It is true that, in the case of the beasts described as burned without the camp, it was by express divine statute that this took place; whereas in the case of Christ it was in consequence of the rage and fury of enemies. But even here there was the higher law of a divine ordination, as is intimated in Acts, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge," etc. And thus we see the force of the apostle's *διὸ* to be, that the burning without

the camp was appointed to serve as a type, not understood at the time, but to be unfolded afterwards, of the hurrying of the Son of God out to Calvary. And this whole comparison is made, in order to illustrate how the priests, and others adhering to the Mosaic institutions after Christ had come, cut themselves off from the benefits of the new covenant.

Ver. 13. This verse embodies an admonition to follow Christ, grounded upon the facts which have just been exhibited. *Τοίνυν* usually occupies the second or third place in a sentence; but here it is stationed in the fore-front, as occasionally also in the Septuagint. It refers to the fact of Christ's having been driven out from the gates of Jerusalem; and it assigns this as a reason why we should cheerfully go forth to Him. *Ἐξω παρεμβολῆς*, however, does not here mean literally out from Jerusalem, but rather out from the region of Judaism, or as Theodoret well expresses it, *ἔξω τῆς κατὰ νόμον πολιτείας*—out from the legal constitution or dispensation. As Christ Himself was thrown out from Jerusalem, so we must leave the Mosaic law, and, by parity of reasoning, every system inconsistent with the gospel, if we would enjoy the benefits which the Son of God by His death has secured. To cleave to Judaism is to reject Christ. To return to Judaism, after having left it, is to fall away from Christ. We must forsake everything that is inconsistent with the truth and purity of the gospel, although in doing so we may expose ourselves to the reproach of the world. The hostility of their unbelieving countrymen, the Hebrews must be prepared to encounter, and they must cheerfully bear the reproach of Christ. The phrase *ὀνειδισμόν αὐτοῦ* is quite similar to *ὀνειδισμόν τοῦ Χριστοῦ* in chap. xi. 26; and although here it might mean reproach like Christ's, yet perhaps, after the analogy of the former, it should rather be rendered, reproach on account of Him—the reproach which adherence to His cause entails. The genuine disciple will feel it honour to be accounted worthy to suffer shame for the sake of his Master.

Ver. 14. This verse exhibits a ground for the admonition of the preceding. There is no reason why we should be reluctant to follow Christ at any cost, for we have not here any permanent position, but are destined for another state, where

Christ only can make us happy. *Ωδε does not refer to Jerusalem, but it refers to this world generally. We are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth. Our home is not here, it is in heaven; and our privileges are secured by Christ, so that we are bound to follow Him. It has been supposed that οὐ μένουσαν πόλιν might contain an allusion to the speedily approaching destruction of Jerusalem, as foretold by Christ; and certainly, when that terrific event did take place, these words of the apostle would appear deeply impressive. Still they are to be viewed not as specifically designating Jerusalem, but as denying the existence of any abiding city anywhere upon earth. Not the most stable of earthly strongholds is permanent; but if we be the true followers of Christ, we are the destined residents of a city that shall never be overthrown. This is the New Jerusalem, which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God. Μέλλουσιν does not express the idea that this city is as yet non-existent, but only that it is future with regard to believers still alive upon earth. It already exists in heaven, and it is to be sought for by us in the sense of being prayed for, prepared for, and habitually desired.

Ver. 15. This verse is regarded by Bleek as affording an argument in favour of the idea that βρώματα, in ver. 9, means sacrifices, seeing that here the proper sacrifices for Christians to offer are brought into view as a contrast. Sacrifices of praise let us present, not such sacrifices as are susceptible of being eaten. But the emphasis of this verse rests upon δι' αὐτοῦ, and the οὖν refers to Christ, hurried without the gates of Jerusalem, and suffering upon Calvary, to expiate sin with His own blood. Here is the contrast to the spiritual sacrifices of the verse before us. Christ's sacrificial death has put an end to all sacrifices of slain beasts. In Him everything of priesthood that exists is now centred, and in Him alone is the true victim for sin to be found. Not therefore by earthly priests any more are we to seek to approach to God, but by Christ, the one and only priest; and not such sacrifices as Jewish worshippers brought of old to their priests for presentation are we to bring, but spiritual sacrifices only; and even these sacrifices are acceptable only on the ground of the one all-perfect sacrifice of the Son of God. It is hardly a correct exhibition, at least not one sufficiently full,

which Tholuck gives of this verse, when he says, that in the room of the Jewish sacrifices there is now only needed self-dedication to God; that prayer is the thing which has taken the place of sacrifice. The proper view of the subject, however, is, that the literal sacrifice of Christ has taken the place of the literal sacrifices of the law; and that as the Saviour's offering is possessed of infinite value, literal sacrifices are no longer required from us. We only need to approach to God, pleading the merits of Christ's sacrifice, and thanking Him for the rich and abundant mercy of the gospel. *Δι' αὐτοῦ*, as the Mediator who has made a real propitiation, we are reconciled to God, and thus constituted a spiritual priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices well-pleasing to God through Christ. *Θυσίαν αἰνέσεως* corresponds to the Hebrew תודה מִלִּפְּיָהּ, which was the designation of a peculiar kind of thank-offering described in Lev. vii. 12. This thank-offering is represented in Ps. l. 14, cvii. 22, cxvi. 17, as the outward expression or symbol of thankfulness, cherished in the heart and proclaimed by the tongue. And the apostle here employs the Old Testament name to designate, not the external offering as under the law, but the feeling as cherished in the soul and uttered by the mouth. Accordingly he adds the explanation, *τοῦτ' ἐστὶ καρπὸν χειλέων*. This change, however, in the use of *θυσίαν αἰνέσεως* was not one arbitrarily and suddenly effected by the author of this epistle. The passages already quoted from Psalms exhibit the commencing step of this process; and another onward movement is traceable in Hos. xiv. 3, who speaks of rendering to God שְׁפָתַי פָּרִים, translated in our version "the calves of our lips." As פָּרִים, however, is not in the construct state, but in apposition with שְׁפָתַי, the phrase should rather be rendered, "presenting our lips as calves or bullocks," that is, making praise serve as sacrifice. It is remarkable that the Septuagint translates the Hebrew into *καρπὸν χειλέων*, showing that they must have read פָּרִי first. Now, overlooking the points, which of course had no existence in the days of the LXX., פָּרִי is just the construct state of *parim*, so that there was a real ambiguity; and yet it is a remarkable fact, that the two renderings, though apparently so different, yet bring out identically the same sense. "Calves of the lips," or the lips offered as calves, and "fruit of the lips," both de-

scribe prayers and praises offered to God. In other passages of the Old Testament, "the fruit of the lips" is spoken of; and the image suggests the idea that the heart is a root, and that thoughts, and feelings, and words, are branches, and leaves, and fruit growing therefrom. *Ὁμολογούντων* agrees with *χειλέων*, and describes the lips as praising and thanking the name of God. It is equivalent to *ἐξομολογούντων τῷ ὀνόματι τοῦ Θεοῦ*, which the Seventy employ to represent the phrase *יְהוָה נֶחֱמָה לְהַלְלֵהוּ*. *Αὐτοῦ* here does not refer to Christ, but to God, in the preceding clause, as *δι' αὐτοῦ* looks back to Christ. And *διαπαντὸς* means continually, as opposed to the periodical offerings of the Jewish law.

Ver. 16. Here another of the spiritual sacrifices which believers as a priesthood are to offer to God is brought into view. Although we are to praise God continually, yet we are at the same time to remember our brethren in distress. That contemplation of God which should draw away the mind from the duties and obligations of life, would be a spurious religion (Ps. l. 14; Hos. vi. 6). He that loveth him that begat, loveth him also that is begotten of him. *Εὐποίας* and *κοινωνίας* are very nearly synonymous. *Εὐποία* belongs to the later Greek, and signifies doing well to another, beneficence, kindness. It occurs only here in Scripture, but it is to be found in other Greek writers. *Κοινωνία* signifies fellowship, communication, sharing with others, bestowment of good things. This usage did not originally belong to the word, but seems to have originated among the apostles; and thus is there furnished an illustration of the beneficent character of the gospel. *Τοιαύταις* refers not to the sacrifice of the 15th verse, but simply to those mentioned in this verse itself. With good deeds done to others God is well pleased. Even a cup of cold water given to a disciple in name of a disciple, shall not lose its reward. *Εὐαρεστεῖται* is a use of the passive which, although unprecedented in the New Testament or the Septuagint, is yet not uncommon in the Greek.

Ver. 17. While referring to particular moral obligations at the commencement of this chapter, the apostle comes to speak of what is due to the rulers of the church; and with respect to those who are gone, he counsels that their memory should be

affectionately cherished, and their good example faithfully followed. This retrospect to past times suggests the idea of the deficiencies and dangers of the Hebrews at present, and leads the apostle to admonish them to throw aside every lingering attachment to Judaism, and follow Him who had suffered without the gates of Jerusalem with unfaltering zeal. At the verse before us, those rulers of the church who are still alive are brought into view, and willing submission to their authority is enjoined. *Πειθεσθε* expresses the idea of obedience, and *ὑποταγεσθε* of courteous and ready submission. Of course it is self-evident that the submission here enjoined is not an absolute, implicit, unthinking submission to whatever the caprice of rulers might dictate, irrespectively of all persuasion in the members of its being right or wrong. There is no such authority legitimately exercised in the church of Christ. Believers must be ruled as intelligent, moral, and responsible beings, who search the Scriptures like the Bereans, to see whether the instructions given to them are well grounded. But these points are not here brought into view, because it was not till a subsequent age that the authority of spiritual functionaries was pushed beyond due limits. Probably the apostle knew the rulers of the Hebrews, and was aware of their being faithful men; and perhaps he might even have learned from them some of the points to which his admonition had reference. There is next assigned a reason for the submission to rulers enjoined: *αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀγγελοὶ ὑμῶν ἐν ᾧ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν*. This is not so much a statement of facts with regard to the Hebrew teachers, as the exhibition of a general principle. It is the province of the rulers of the church to watch over the flock, not allowing themselves to fall into the sleep of indolence or security; and thus the Hebrew pastors, although not directly addressed, are reminded of the weighty duties which they have to discharge, of which they are responsible. And what should stimulate them to diligence, as well as dispose the people to be docile and submissive to their authority, is the consideration that they must give account when the great Shepherd appears (1 Pet. v. 4). It has been made a question whether *ἐν ᾧ τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν* be connected with *ἀγγελοὶ ὑμῶν* or with *ἀποδότες*; but there can be no reasonable doubt that the former connection is pre-

ferable, as otherwise the nature of the watching would not be defined. There has also been difference of opinion with regard to the motive assigned, *ἵνα μετὰ χαρᾶς τοῦτο ποιῶσιν*, whether *τοῦτο* refers to the giving of account, or to the watching that they may give account with joy, or that watch with joy. Now here obviously the deciding principle must be the consideration whether the motive be addressed to the people or to the rulers; and as it is manifestly the people that are spoken to, the meaning must be, that their obedience will render the pastor's superintendence a pleasant duty, and not a painful, thankless toil. If by their stubbornness and waywardness they should grieve his heart, and increase the difficulties of his already sufficiently trying position, the evil consequences would recoil upon themselves, and they would experience an issue quite the reverse of profitable. *Ἀλυσιτελές* is a comparatively mild word, and the use of it here is an example of *μείωσις*. Less is uttered than is really meant. To mar their pastor's efficiency would be unprofitable to them; yea, it would be highly detrimental.

Ver. 18. From the spiritual rulers of the Hebrews the apostle makes a transition to himself, who, though not an office-bearer among them, yet occupied an analogous position as one who, though absent, was attempting to instruct them by letter: *προσεύχεσθε περὶ ἡμῶν*. Similar requests for prayer are repeatedly made by Paul in his epistles, as in 1 Thess. v. 25; and the question may be raised, whether they necessarily refer only to the writer himself, according to a common figure, or to others also labouring at the time along with him. Sometimes, perhaps, they may refer only to the apostle himself; but two considerations seem to require a different interpretation here, viz. that he has been speaking of spiritual rulers, and therefore under *ἡμῶν* includes them with himself; and secondly, that in the following verse, where something referring to himself only is mentioned, he uses the singular. And now follows a ground for the request of an interest in their prayers: *πεποίθαμεν γὰρ ὅτι καλὴν συνείδησιν ἔχομεν*. Here *πεποίθαμεν* is the received reading; and it signifies, we are confident, we have persuaded ourselves, and therefore feel sure. But *πειθόμεθα* being supported by a decided preponderance of evidence, is now generally adopted; and signifying, as it does, "we persuade ourselves, we

trust," it seems much more suitable to the idea expressed as the object, that we have a good conscience. Indeed, some who adhere to the received reading, feeling the unsuitableness of the connection, make *πεπολθμεν* a clause by itself: "We are confident, that is, in God," and then render thus, "because we have a good conscience." But it seems preferable to view this phrase as expressing the object; and with *πειθόμεθα* all is simple: "we trust that we have a good conscience." *Καλὴν* means here the same as *ἀγαθὴν*, elsewhere connected with *συνείδησιν*, a good conscience, that is, not the conviction of perfect freedom from sin, but the consciousness of honestly striving to serve God according to the gospel. Some connect *θέλοντες* with *πειθόμεθα*, as if it exhibited a ground of the persuasion,—feel persuaded because we are conscious of wishing; but it seems preferable to join this participle to *ἔχομεν*, as illustrating wherein the good consisted or manifested itself. It is not a mere wish which *θέλοντες* expresses here, but an earnest desire, though modestly expressed,—a striving to walk well in all matters. The apostle felt it due to himself to say, that whatever might be his faults, he was conscious of a sincere desire and constant effort to conduct his whole procedure in accordance with the will of Heaven. *Καλῶς* and *καλὴν* are obviously chosen with respect to one another. *Ἐν πᾶσιν* means not among all persons, but in all things. *Ἀναστρέφεσθαι* signifies to conduct one's self, to pursue a course in life. And the defence of himself which the apostle here makes when asking for the prayers of the Hebrews, seems to intimate that his procedure on some occasions had given offence to them, and had appeared of a questionable character. How exactly this suits the Apostle Paul, whose liberal principles so often exposed him to the displeasure of the Jews, need not be insisted on. Very similar words, too, fell from Paul when he was brought before the authorities for unsettling the principles of his countrymen: "I have walked in all good conscience until this day."

Ver. 19. The apostle's request for an interest in the prayers of the Hebrews is urged, first, by the consideration that he felt he was acting in all good conscience, and therefore could without hypocrisy ask them to pray for him. But another reason is brought out in ver. 19: *περισσότερος δὲ παρακαλῶ τοῦτο*

ποιῆσαι, ἵνα τάχιον ἀποκατασταθῶ ὑμῶν. More abundantly, more earnestly did the apostle beseech them, τοῦτο ποιῆσαι, to do this, that is, to pray for him; and the reason or purpose is subjoined, that he might be restored to them the sooner. Here we have an exhibition of the apostle's confidence in the power of prayer, not only for the securing of spiritual benefits, but also for the exerting of our influence upon the course of events. Exactly the same idea occurs in Paul's writings, as in Philem. 22: "I hope that, through your prayers, I shall be given unto you."

It is also obviously implied in the word ἀποκατασταθῶ, that the writer of this epistle had stood in personal relations to the Hebrews, that he had lived among them, and was well known to them. Now these circumstances perfectly suit Paul, who repeatedly visited the mother church at Jerusalem, and brought up to them offerings from the Gentile churches during a period of distress. These points do not prove his authorship of the epistle, but, along with the numerous other circumstances which have been mentioned, they form a probable argument.

Ver. 20. The apostle's request for the prayers of the Hebrews in his behalf is followed by a prayer of his own for them; and this prayer takes its complexion from the tenor of the epistle: ὁ δὲ Θεὸς τῆς εἰρήνης. This phrase is of frequent occurrence in the writings of Paul, as Rom. xv. 33, xvi. 20, Phil. iv. 9, 1 Thess. v. 23; and it seems designed to express the idea that peace proceeds from God, and also that He loves peace. The divine scheme of mercy puts us at peace with God, with ourselves, and with one another. It is commonly conceived that this designation has been chosen by the apostle with reference to the divisions which Judaizing tendencies had occasioned among the Hebrews, alienating them from their teachers, and making them jealous of the apostle himself. Their feelings, therefore, might be soothed by being reminded that the God whom they professed to serve was the God of peace. Next He is described as ὁ ἀναγαγὼν ἐκ νεκρῶν τὸν ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων. It is the death and ascension of the Saviour that are the two great events of His career prominently exhibited in this epistle, and His resurrection from the dead has never hitherto been mentioned. This circumstance leads Bleek to draw the conclusion that ἀναγαγὼν

must here mean, bringing up from the dead to the glory of the heavenly world, ἀνὰ expressing the idea, not of *back*, but upwards; and the phrase thus conjoining the ascension with the resurrection. But ἀναγαγεῖν ἐκ νεκρῶν is of frequent occurrence in Scripture, as in Rom. x. 7; and it simply means raising from the dead, so that this must be the idea here expressed. And if the question be asked, why the apostle does not here, agreeably to his usual practice, rather say, "who elevated to glory the great Shepherd of the sheep," perhaps the reason may be, that by laying hold of the resurrection, an event intermediate between the cross and the ascension, he is enabled at once to suggest both his leading ideas; and, moreover, his readers are reminded, that whatever might be their difficulties, or those of the apostle, that God who broke the fetters of the tomb was able to effect their deliverance whenever it might be His pleasure. Christ is described as the Shepherd of the sheep, according to a figure of frequent occurrence in Scripture; and the mention of the resurrection would remind the Hebrews that, agreeably to His own words, as the good Shepherd He had given His life for the sheep. There is a very similar description of Moses in Isa. lxiii. 11, which is thus rendered by the Seventy: τοῦ ὁ ἀναβιβάσας ἐκ τῆς θαλάσσης τὸν ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων. Now already, in the third chapter of this epistle, there has been instituted a formal comparison between Moses and Christ; and if Moses, therefore, be called the shepherd, with the utmost propriety is the Saviour named the great Shepherd. Doubtless the epithet τὸν μέγαν looks back by way of comparison to Moses; just as also, with respect to Aaron, Christ is designated in chap. x. 21, ἱερεὺς μέγας.

The words ἐν αἵματι διαθήκης αἰωνίου look back to the old covenant, which has been so fully considered, and they represent the covenant of which Christ is Mediator as eternal, in contradistinction to the covenant of the law, which was temporary, and had vanished away. The connection of the words before us, however, has been the subject of considerable doubt, some viewing them as in construction with ἀναγαγόν, others with ποιμένα, and others with μέγαν. According to the last view, which is followed by Rambach, Baumgarten, Heinrichs, and Ebrard, the meaning is, that Christ a shepherd was made

great by the blood of the covenant. According to the second view, which is adopted by Bœhme, Kuinœl, and Tholuck, the meaning is, that He became the Shepherd of the sheep through means of the blood referred to. But the connection supposed in both these modes of construing the passage is loose and disjointed. It seems vastly preferable, with Calvin, Bengel, Michaelis, Bleek, and Delitzsch, to join *ἐν αἵματι* with *ἀναγαγών*, making this sense, that God has raised up the Shepherd through virtue of the blood of the covenant. But for the efficacy of the Saviour's death in ratifying the covenant, He could not have been raised from the dead at all. His resurrection was an evidence of the acceptance of His sacrifice, and proved the virtue of His death. In chap. ix. 25, where the ascension and entrance into the holy place above are described as taking place *ἐν αἵματι*, the meaning of *ἐν* seems to be *with* His own blood, that is, carrying His blood into the sanctuary, as the priests upon earth carried the blood of victims in a basin within the veil. But here, where God is described as raising up Christ *ἐν αἵματι*, *ἐν* seems to indicate, not an accompaniment of the resurrection, but something in virtue of which, or through means of which, it took place. Because the shedding of His blood had satisfied justice, therefore He was rescued from the grave. In apposition with *ποιμένα* stands *τὸν Κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν*, our Lord Jesus, who as a Shepherd rules and guides His flock, as a Saviour saves them.

And now follows the substance of the prayer: *καταρτίσαι ὑμᾶς ἐν παντί ἐργῷ ἀγαθῷ*—make you complete in every good work. Universal holiness should be the object aimed at by believers. It is not enough that we shun one kind of transgression; we must flee from sin in every shape. It is not enough that we practise one Christian duty; we must endeavour to abound in all that is good. And the apostle subjoins what is the test and rule of duty to us: it is the will of God, as revealed in Scripture; and we must make the doing of this rule our great business. It is of importance, too, to remember, while striving to lead a holy life, that it is God only who can impart to us needful spiritual strength. Not only is it God's will we are to do, but it is God's power that is to fit us for doing it. And on account of the great importance of this principle, although it

has already been implied in *καταρτίσαι*, there is added, as a fuller expression of it, the phrase, *ποιῶν ἐν ὑμῖν τὸ εὐάρεστον ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ*. God Himself fits us for doing His will, by working in us what is well-pleasing in His sight. He rectifies the springs of action in the heart, and thus regulates and reforms the life. *Ἐν ὑμῖν* does not mean "among you," as if referring to what God did in the church, but it means "in you," as descriptive of the inward change which is wrought in the heart by the power of God. And still there is added the phrase, *διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, to intimate that, while God works all that is good in the believer's heart and life, it is only through His Son that He does so, and in connection with the gospel. The idea of sanctifying energy being put forth upon sinners of mankind, irrespectively of the mediation of Christ, is altogether foreign to the Scriptures.

And now follows the doxology : *ὃ ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων. Ἀμήν*. It has been made a question whether it be God or Christ that is here referred to. So far as dogmatical grounds are concerned, it might be either ; for there is a similar ascription of glory to Christ by himself in Rom. xvi. 27, 2 Tim. iv. 18 ; and to God by himself in Gal. i. 5, 1 Tim. i. 17 ; and to God and Christ conjoined in Rev. v. 13. Which of them, then, is here meant ? In defence of the reference to God, it may be pled, that God is the leading subject of the verse, *ὁ ἀναγαγών, . . . καταρτίσαι ποιῶν*, who is described as doing all that is described. But, on the other hand, it is a very powerful consideration, that the name of Christ stands immediately before the relative *ὃ*. And not only so, but Christ is celebrated throughout the verse, as the medium through which God operates. Therefore perhaps the relative finds its antecedent in *Χριστοῦ*.

Ver. 22. With the above prayer that divine grace might be accorded to the Hebrews, to strengthen for all duty, and to make them perfect in holiness, the epistle might have ended ; but there is added a kind of postscript, quite conformably to the character of letter-writing, as is also the case in Romans. The body of the Epistle to the Hebrews has quite the air of a treatise rather than of a letter ; but the epistolary form becomes obvious at the close. The apostle is earnestly desirous that the instructions and admonitions which he has imparted may not fail

of their object, and therefore he beseeches the Hebrews to give them a conscientious consideration : παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ἀνέχεσθε τοῦ λόγου τῆς παρακλήσεως. Ἀνεχεσθε, "bear, suffer, reject not." Perhaps there may be here an implied reference to the fact, that the writer was not an office-bearer among the Hebrews, and therefore had less claim to demand their attention. Παρακλήσεως means here, of course, not consolation, but admonition. And what is the word of admonition meant? Some say, only the preceding section; but there can be no doubt that the advices, and warnings, and directions of the whole epistle are included. The letter, although highly instructive, has yet, upon the whole, exhibited a predominatingly hortatory character, and therefore is well designated λόγος τῆς παρακλήσεως. And even were there less reason for assigning this extent of reference to παρακλήσεως here, the use of ἐπέστυλα in the following clause would be quite decisive: "for I have written an epistle to you briefly." The entreaty to the Hebrews to receive his admonitions, though sharp in a good spirit, is seconded by the consideration, καὶ . . . γάρ—and do so, for I have written. Διὰ βραχείων means, like δι' ὀλίγων in 1 Pet. v. 12, "briefly, with few words." Many of his words had been severe, but he had endeavoured to compress them as much as possible. The epistle, though long when compared with some others, yet may be described as brief, viewed in comparison with the extent of the subject handled in it, and also with what the apostle felt the desire of saying. As on a certain occasion he prolonged his discourse till midnight, so here his zeal would have impelled him to write at much greater length; but he brings his letter to a close, that he may not exhaust their patience, but may rather allure them.

Ver. 23. Next follows a piece of intelligence regarding Timothy : γινώσκετε τὸν ἀδελφὸν Τιμόθεον ἀπολελυμένον, μεθ' οὗ, ἐὰν τάχιον ἔρχηται, ὄψομαι ὑμᾶς. It admits of question whether γινώσκετε be here the imperative or the indicative. It has been very generally conceived to be the imperative. The indicative would affirm it as a fact, that they knew Timothy was free, which would be a needless statement; but the imperative, while it presupposes their knowledge of the circumstances in which he had been placed, communicates the information that

he was now at liberty. Ἀπολελυμένον describes the knowledge communicated, according to the common idea, "know that he is dismissed;" and does not mean, according to Schulz, "the dismissal," as if it were merely descriptive of the person about whom the statement was to be made, in which case τὸν must have been prefixed to it. The precise nature, however, of the fact indicated in ἀπολελυμένον has been the subject of dispute. This verb sometimes means "to dismiss from prison," as in Luke xxii. 68, Acts iii. 13. It also means "to despatch on some mission, to send away on some official duty," as in Acts xiii. 3, xv. 30, 33. Which of these is the meaning here? Most probably the former. The fact of the words being used quite alone, without any statement of circumstances, requires that something be meant that would easily be apprehended. With regard to a mission, we should naturally have expected that the place or purpose of it would be mentioned. Besides, the imprisonment of an apostle was likely to be a thing pretty generally known; and it is obvious, that while information is here communicated, it is presupposed that the Hebrews knew what state Timothy had been in immediately before. "Know, learn, let me tell you, that he is dismissed or released." The brevity of the statement suits perfectly with the supposition, that restoration to liberty is the thing meant.

Next follows a statement of the apostle's designs. He is expecting that Timothy, who had been set at liberty, will not be long of coming to him; and if he arrive soon, the two together will visit the Hebrews, that they may strengthen them in the faith, and rejoice with them. These circumstances are very favourable to the supposition, although not of course perfectly decisive, that Paul was the writer of this epistle; for the intimate connection between them stands patent upon the face of Scripture. With none of the apostles was Timothy on such a friendly footing as with the great apostle of the Gentiles, who speaks of him as "my son Timothy." Another inference obviously follows from this verse, viz. that the parties to whom this epistle was addressed were not the Hebrews in general scattered over many lands, but some Hebrew church of a particular place, or, at the most, of some particular region; Jerusalem say some, Palestine say others, although there have

also been critics who fix upon a different country altogether. On this question, however, we do not enter at present, excepting only to say that it must have been some particular place.

Ver. 24. The apostle next sends salutations to the Hebrews. First of all he salutes the rulers of the church separately, doubtless in order to do them honour in the view of the church. The rule of spiritual office-bearers being so much dependent upon opinion for its beneficial influence, it is of the utmost consequence that nothing ever be done to lower them in the estimation of the people. And besides the rulers, he salutes also the members, *πάντας τοὺς ἁγίους*—all the saints, all the holy brethren, inclusive also, doubtless, of any believers who might be sojourning among them. These salutations, moreover, while they duly honour those in office, obviously imply that the epistle was not sent to them only, as if they constituted the church, but was the common property of all the members, which exposes the absurdity of the procedure of the Church of Rome in withholding the Scriptures from the laity. Conjoined with his own salutations, the apostle sends those also of other parties who were along with him, viz. *οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰταλίας*. The meaning of this phrase has been keenly contested, as bearing upon the question where the epistle was written. Some say the phrase must designate persons originally belonging to Italy, but removed from it at the time—persons who have come from Italy. But this conclusion is more than the construction will warrant. *Ἀπὸ* is employed to designate the fact of belonging to a place, whether the person continue to reside in it or not. So our Lord is designated *Ἰησοῦς ἀπὸ Ναζαρέτ*, Jesus of Nazareth; and He is so called, whether abiding in Galilee or proceeding to Jerusalem. There is no proof, therefore, that the persons spoken of might not be in Italy at the time. It has been said, however, that if in Italy, they could not at any rate be in Rome, for the apostle in this case would have named the capital. But this conclusion by no means follows, for there might be in Rome, along with the apostle, persons not born there, nor even residing there, but visitors from other parts of Italy; and the phrase *οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰταλίας* would be the most suitable, as comprehending them all. The probability therefore is, that this

epistle was written from Italy, and most likely from Rome, and sent to Palestine, and probably to Jerusalem itself.

Ver. 25. The epistle concludes with a prayer for grace to all the Hebrew Christians. *Χάρις* stands alone, but of course it is the grace of God that is meant. So Paul concludes all his letters, sometimes using the simple term *ἡ χάρις*, and sometimes subjoining the name of Christ, and sometimes also adding, "love of God and fellowship of the Spirit." The grace here meant is the grace that saves, and blesses, and purifies, and gladdens. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ accepts the guilty, and blesses them with pardon. It cleanses the heart from the defilement of sin, and prepares for the service of heaven. And it fills the bosom with all joy and peace in believing.

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